

# SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING-BRADY, DETECTIVES.

Published Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, by Frank Tousey.

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NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 10, 1899.

Price 5 Cents.

## THE BRADY'S AFTER A MILLION;

— OR —

## THEIR CHASE TO SAVE AN HEIRESS.

BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.



While Young King Brady faced his foes the door swung open. "Hold!" cried a trumpet voice. Old King Brady stood on the threshold with a brace of revolvers.



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## The Bradys After a Million

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### THEIR CHASE TO SAVE AN HEIRESS.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### A STRANGE CASE.

A leading New York newspaper one morning, under a thrilling caption, printed the following remarkable story:

"In the most fashionable part of upper Fifth avenue is the palatial residence of one of New York's greatest millionaires, the Honorable Loyd Baron, Esq.

"Mr. Baron is a widower, but his beautiful daughter, Gladys, keeps his house open and is a bright star in the smart set of the metropolis.

"She has many suitors, as any very lovely young lady, heiress to three or more millions, should. But she has so far refused all offers and devotes herself to her doting father and his home.

"Up to within a month, Loyd Baron has counted himself in this respect the happiest man in New York. But recently a black cloud has overshadowed the cerulean blue of his domestic sky.

"Miss Gladys has become the victim of a very strange hallucination, as it is believed to be. But if, as she claims, it is a fact, then it is a startling state of affairs.

"She claims to suffer from the persecutions of an unknown follower, whom she has never seen, nor cannot describe. Wherever she goes, that dread presence pursues her. Whether in driving, or at the opera, or even in her home, that mysterious haunting presence is there.

"What is more, it has exerted upon her a strange influence, which she fears will yet overcome her will and force her to obey its unknown will, and perhaps follow it, maybe to death or a fate far worse. Whether it is a psychological influence or some occult force her friends are at a loss to conjecture. Physicians are baffled and scientists called by the distracted father shake their heads gravely, but offer no sure explanation.

"Meanwhile the young girl's nerves are getting overstrung. She is brave and strong, and a few moments' conversation with her puts to flight any theory of mental aberration. What, then, can explain this strange affliction? Detectives have been employed, and there is a rumor that those famous sleuth hounds, the two King Bradys, are secretly at work on the case.

"If this is true there is no doubt but that a correct solution may be expected at an early day. In the meantime an anxious public awaits results with deepest interest and profound sympathy for one of the most popular young ladies in New York society."

In a condensed form, this was the newspaper statement of the mysterious case of Gladys Baron.

At once all New York became interested. Some were inclined to pooh-pooh the affair and attribute the young girl's trouble to a life of ease and luxury, which sometimes induces a weak state of the nerves and often that peculiar affliction known as hypochondria.

When the matter was laid before the Chief of the Secret Service force he at once declared:

"It is my conviction that your daughter, Mr. Baron, is supplied with a dangerous drug in some unknown manner by a secret foe. This drug is inducing a peculiar affection of the mind."

"My soul!" exclaimed the millionaire with a groan. "I do not know of an enemy in the world."

The chief smiled.

"That is no evidence that you are without one," he said.

"Who could it be?"

"Perhaps some person whom you may consider your most intimate friend."

"It is hard to believe that."

"Mr. Baron, your experience with human depravity is small, else you would easily believe my statement. I may



also state with confidence and the lesson of long experience that human depravity is found not alone among the poor or the criminal classes.

"There are no shrewder, more dangerous foes or villains than those who walk the higher paths of life.

"Their opportunities are larger, their eminent respectability is a baffling cloak, and their designs usually the most cruel and deadly, because they have exclusive opportunity and means of execution.

"They are the hardest class the modern detective has to deal with. But they are just as sure to come into the net sooner or later. Has your daughter many suitors?"

The millionaire shuddered.

His face grew ashen.

"Ah, now you call it to mind, I remember one man whose suit she declined. He grew angry and threatened her."

The chief was interested.

"What is his name?"

"Bertrand Liscomb."

"Is he wealthy?"

"No. He was a clerk in my employ, but I discharged him for suspected dishonesty."

"Is he respectable?"

"Yes. He goes in society, and secured his foothold through my patronage."

The chief made a few entries in his note book. He was calm and inscrutable, as a chief of detectives should be.

"All right, Mr. Baron," he said courteously. "I think I have the prime points in the case. I will make a report to you the first available day."

"What is your first course?"

The chief smiled.

"Detectives never disclose their methods of procedure," he said. "But I will tell you this: If the two men whom I shall put on this case cannot solve it, then it is beyond the power of any detective in America to give you a solution. That is all."

The chief turned to his desk.

The millionaire went out.

Some time passed.

Then there was a tap on the door.

"Come in!"

The door opened.

On the threshold stood a man of remarkable appearance. He was tall and muscular. His features were of a strong type and capable of a versatile makeup.

He wore a tight blue coat buttoned close up to the stock collar at the neck. A broad-brimmed white felt hat was on his head.

His eyes were keen and bright. His hair was completely white.

In a crowd, however large, he was of that type always distinguished from his fellows. His was no ordinary mould. Such was Old King Brady.

In the inner circles of crime, no man was better known or more dreaded than this famous old sleuth.

Old King Brady entered.

Behind him was another.

This was a young man of strong, resolute features, and

marked with the same shrewdness possessed by Old King Brady.

In many respects, setting aside the difference in age, these two men were alike. Also their names were the same, that is to say, each was named Brady, though they were no blood relation, so far as they knew.

Harry Brady, or, as he was known, Young King Brady, was a pupil or protege of the old detective.

The latter, who had a real affection for the young man, had taught him the art of detective work.

And the young man was an apt pupil. Together this old man and the young man worked on some of the most famous and thrilling cases of crime in the country.

And success stalked in their path.

Wherever they struck they carried terror and dismay to the heart of the professional crook and thief.

The chief wheeled in his chair as the two detectives entered.

"Ah, welcome, both of you!" he cried heartily. "You have come in a good time. I have been wanting to see you."

"Ah?" asked Old King Brady in his curt fashion. "A new case?"

"Exactly," replied the chief. "How do you do, Harry?"

"Well, thank you," replied Young King Brady.

"I am glad of that. Did you see that old man who has just gone out?"

The detectives exchanged glances.

"Mr. Baron?"

"Exactly!" cried the chief eagerly. "Then you know him?"

"I have been his shadow for a week past," said Young King Brady.

The chief stared.

"Egad!" he ejaculated. "Are you fellows on the case already?"

"Is that the case?" asked Old King Brady with a smile.

"Well, I am beat!" gasped the chief. "You fellows are ahead of everything. Why, the old man can't know it. He was just in here to see me about that peculiar persecution suffered by his daughter."

"Humph!" ejaculated the old detective.

"Well!" commented Young King Brady.

"Well, why the deuce don't you explain?" cried the chief. "What have you been shadowing him for, Harry?"

"If I hadn't he would have been a dead man before this," replied the young detective grimly.

The chief was dumfounded.

Finally he repeated:

"A dead man!"

"Yes."

"Well, I reckon I don't know anything about this case. I call you in here to tell you news and you supersede me. Are you possessed of supernatural gifts?"

"Purely accident," said Old King Brady. "We have simply been tracking a gang of crooks, and as chance happened, they were on a game which involved the life of Millionaire Baron."

"Ah, then you have not placed the mystery yet?"



"We do not know why they are seeking Baron's life. We simply know that his life is sought."

"Ah, it looks to me as if this strange experience of Gladys Baron, then, was only one incident out of a projected web of crime."

"Exactly!" replied Old King Brady. "These are the points: Some secret gang is at work on a great plot of villainy. Their first purpose is to assassinate Baron. His daughter is another victim, though it is not known that her life is threatened. Who the ruling power underneath this machine of crime is, or what the real purpose is, yet remains a mystery."

"Which must be solved!"

"We hope to do it."

"Enough!" said the chief. "I am assured that you will undertake it?"

"We are already at work upon it."

"Then that is all."

The two detectives did not remain much longer.

After a brief social chat they arose and left the office.

A few moments later they were in the street.

They were seen to leave the chief's office by a man in ragged clothes and soft felt hat, who was watching from a doorway opposite.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE CRIME.

It was now dusk.

The two detectives sauntered leisurely along until finally they emerged into Chatham square.

About this locality gather some of the most pronounced types of criminality in New York.

The man who had seen them emerge from the chief's office had followed them.

He was now joined by another.

The newcomer was a giant in proportions and strength.

In all the great city two more desperate cutthroats did not exist.

Mike McCue and Jake Danton were only two of a gang known as the Big Six.

They hung together like brothers.

When one was in trouble the others were sacredly pledged to give him help.

Should one get into the clutches of the law, no effort would be spared to get him out of jail. And expert jail breakers as well as cracksmen they all were.

Thus they were known on the roster kept by McCue, who was the chief:

Number One, Mike McCue.

Number Two, Jake Danton.

Number Three, Howard Spero.

Number Four, Val Smith.

Number Five, Sharkey O'Hane.

Number Six, The Unknown.

Such they were marked on the roll call. Names were never called except in the most secret sessions.

Number Six, or, as he was secretly called, The Unknown, had no name in the fraternity. His identity was known, of course, but never commented upon.

Shrewd and crafty, merciless and murderous, cruel and revengeful, this confederation of crime's representatives did not confine their extensive operations to New York.

Not to one city, nor one State, nor even one continent.

Gigantic deals had been made which had necessitated operations in Europe. All over the world at one time or another the Big Six had made their power felt.

And now their earnest efforts were concentrated upon a deal in New York City, the like of which Gotham had never seen.

The enormity of this deal, even the most faint conception, was suspected only by two men.

These two men were the Bradys.

The shrewd, cunning and indomitable, almost omnipresent, powers of Old King Brady, with the assistance of Young King Brady, were pitted against the wiles and games, the deep designs and secret methods of the irresistible Big Six.

A wonderful mechanism is the human brain.

But at no game is it so acutely employed, so dexterously manipulated as in the game of crime.

The two Bradys strolled leisurely through Chatham square.

Suddenly the young detective said in an undertone:

"I see one of the crooks!"

"Eh?" exclaimed the old detective. "Where is he?"

"He just went into that basement chop house."

"You are sure?"

"Dead sure!"

"Let us take a look in there."

They crossed the street.

Now, a simple thing sometimes is employed by chance to defeat great ends.

It is possible that the lives of both detectives were spared by just such a simple thing.

As Old King Brady crossed the street his eye caught the glimmer of a mirror in the window of a corner saloon.

This mirror reflected both himself and Young King Brady and also two others in their rear, crossing the street.

These two at a glance the old detective sized up.

They were McCue and Danton.

Though Old King Brady did not know them he suspected that they were following him and the younger detective.

His lip curled in a grim smile.

When they reached the end of the crossing Old King Brady stopped and turned square about.

Young King Brady stopped also.

He looked up in surprise at his confrere. But in an instant he took in the situation.

The two villains who had been following them half halted. But they could not well turn back.

It was plain that they were disconcerted, but they quickened their pace and were compelled to pass within touching distance of Old King Brady.



The old detective fixed a keen, searching gaze upon them as they passed him. He could have secured them then and there, but this was not the time or place.

There were deeper ends in view. The time had not arrived for such decisive action.

Old King Brady allowed them to pass unmolested.

They affected unconcern, but this did not deceive either of the detectives. The moment they were past Old King Brady made a sign to Young King Brady, and both detectives fell in behind the two villains.

Thus the pursuers became the pursued. This change of programme surprised and disconcerted the crooks.

They did not descend into the basement chop house.

Instead, they kept on down Chatham street toward the bridge.

It was now after dark and the shop windows and street lamps were all ablaze.

The two villains quickened their pace. But the detectives were not to be shaken off thus easily.

It was plain that they were puzzled to understand Old King Brady's game.

They conversed in monotone as they walked. Suddenly they came to an abrupt stop.

The two detectives did not stop immediately, but walked a few yards ahead and then turned about. The two villains conferred in low tones, pretending not to notice the detectives.

Then suddenly they made a quick step into a narrow alley leading off from Chatham street.

Old King Brady hesitated.

Young King Brady was about to follow the crooks, but the elder detective said sharply:

"Wait!"

"They will get away," whispered Young King Brady.

"All right! Let them!"

"But—we ought to carry this game out, hadn't we?"

"No further!"

"Why not?"

"It is not best!"

"What were you doing?"

"Simply playing a little game of bluff. That is all."

"I can't see any result," demurred the younger detective, who was all impulse.

"The result has been already effected," said Old King Brady.

"What is it?"

"We have thrown them off the track for the time being. They knew that I was dead onto them when they passed me. If we had gone down into that basement dive the result might have been serious for us."

"Well, that is true," agreed Young King Brady. "But I can't see what harm would have come of dogging them further."

"Just this," said the old detective. "There is other work for us to do."

"All right," agreed Young King Brady. "What shall it be?"

"Something is up to-night."

"You refer to the lead we got this morning? The torn telegram?"

"Yes."

It had happened that early that morning while the two detectives had been shadowing McCue and Danton in Park row a third member of the gang had come up and given McCue a telegram.

He had read it and then torn it into fragments.

It is hardly necessary to say that the two detectives spent a good half hour in collecting those fragments.

They put them together and deciphered the following:

"To Michael McCue, New York—Blow must be struck to-night. Corner Lexington avenue and Forty-fourth street at eleven forty. Cab with red light. Be there.

"NUMBER SIX."

The detectives had drawn some very logical conclusions from this.

Of course it could mean but one thing.

This was the perpetration of some great crime, and the corner of Lexington avenue and Forty-fourth street was the meeting place of the plotters.

The cab with a red light.

All else was a mystery.

But the detectives knew enough to guide them in a plan of action. They would be there.

It was yet early in the evening. Old King Brady knew this. But there were preparations to make.

So the two detectives made their way to a dark corner in a side street. Here in a few moments they made an astonishing change in their personal appearance.

Their coats turned inside out were ragged and shabby. Their hats were metamorphosed into dilapidated caps.

Wigs and beards completed the disguise.

It was a thorough one.

A false nose, cleverly applied, gave Old King Brady the appearance of a genuine Baxter street Hebrew.

Young King Brady was a typical Ikey. Thus made up they went back into Chatham street.

But not again that evening did they get sight of the gang.

At ten o'clock Old King Brady said:

"Harry, it is time to go uptown."

Both boarded an uptown elevated train. At Forty-second street they got out.

It was but a short walk to Forty-fourth street and Lexington avenue. They soon reached that spot.

Until past midnight they haunted the locality. But no cab with a red light showed up.

Nor were any of the Big Six seen. No appointment was kept by them in that spot.

This the detectives were sure of. But a little past midnight two dark figures came hurriedly down through the shadows of Forty-fourth street.

Old King Brady was on one corner and Young King Brady on the other. Both were deep hidden in shadows.

The two hurrying men were on Old King Brady's side.



In a moment the two strangers stopped almost within touching distance.

They were breathing hurriedly and appeared much excited.

"Durn such a game! I tell ye, Spero, it's a bad thing," one of them growled.

"Bert oughter know better, Val," replied the other. "It's the woman in the scrape, and we'll all pay for it yet."

"I never seen any luck come of fooling with women."

"Ye'll allus git the wust of it. Thar's no luck in any game that a woman is at the bottom of."

"Right ye are. Whar do ye s'pose the other boys are?"

"Give it up! We had better keep shady for to-night. Thar'll be an army of detectives onto this crime. Ugh! I never saw such an ugly mess of it in my life. Blood over everything. It makes me sick."

The two crooks slid across the street like shadows.

In a moment Old King Brady had given the signal to Young King Brady.

The young detective was by Old King Brady's side the next moment. The old detective said dismally:

"Boy, we've been fooled!"

"What!" exclaimed Young King Brady.

"There has been murder done and we have been unable to prevent it. For some reason or other the appointment was not kept here as the telegram stated it would be. We have been too late to frustrate the crime, but we are not to late to capture or run down the murderers. Come on!"

### CHAPTER III.

#### MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

Young King Brady understood all with a sense of horror. He knew that the two men who had just passed were murderers. A dark crime had been committed that night.

But why had not the appointment with the red light cab been kept?

This could only be guessed at.

Time would reveal it.

For the present all that could be done was to chase the escaping murderers and place them in limbo.

What the murder was, where it had transpired and who the victim was could only be learned later on.

The morning newspapers would have, in full detail, the account of the latest horrible crime.

So the detectives in their disguises sped away down Forty-fourth street in chase of the fleeing assassins.

For some blocks the pursuit was close.

But suddenly the pursued dropped out of sight as effectually as if the earth had swallowed them.

No amount of effort on the part of the detectives resulted in gaining the slightest clew. They were finally forced to abandon the quest.

It was nearly daylight when they came out from the East river district disappointed and chagrined.

"Well, what now?" asked Young King Brady. "It looks as if we were beaten."

"Which we are, just now, young man," said Old King Brady, in his usual unruffled way. "But the wind will change pretty quick."

"I have an idea that the victim is Loyd Baron."

The old detective started.

"Eh?" he ejaculated. "Bless me, you hit close, young man."

"Oughtn't we to visit the Baron house and inspect the premises, allowing that was the scene of the crime?"

"No!" said Old King Brady shortly.

The young detective was surprised.

"Why not?" he asked.

"Good reasons. The first is, secret work is always the best. We advertise our connection with the case by going there. Again, there is no doubt as to the identity of the murderers. It is only a question of running them down."

Young King Brady saw the force of this argument, which was wholesome indeed. He could not but agree to it.

So the two Bradys did not visit the Baron mansion.

For it was there that the crime had been committed.

The morning newspapers had an account of the crime in detail. The detectives read it with interest.

According to this account, the servants at the Baron mansion had been aroused at the hour of midnight by loud calls for help coming from Mr. Baron's chamber.

They were quickly up and hurried thither, but they were by far too late.

As they burst into his room they discovered a fearful state of affairs.

Blood covered the walls and the carpet, and on the floor lay the body of a man.

His head and face had been mutilated beyond recognition. It had all evidence of being one of the worst murders ever perpetrated in Gotham.

The millionaire's body was not taken in charge by the coroner. As chance had it, his daughter Gladys was in Philadelphia that fateful night.

There were columns upon columns containing an account of the murder.

The victim's past career was reviewed and conjectures made as to the identity and the purpose of the murderers.

Not the least clew suggested itself.

Mr. Baron had been a man of regular habits and much esteemed in the business and social world. No motive for the deed could be assigned.

Detectives by the legion flocked to the mansion and gathered clews.

But not one of these promised anything. The murderers had made their escape in a successful manner.

The very mystery of the crime stirred up all Gotham for a day. But that night a startling denouement came.

From a Pennsylvania train at Jersey City a man of patriotic appearance, with a beautiful young lady on his arm, stepped out of the parlor car.

A reporter standing near recognized him.

He rushed up, asked Mr. Baron a few questions, and



then dashed aboard the ferry boat to reach the office of his newspaper and make the greatest scoop of the season.

For the man was Loyd Baron.

The young lady was his daughter.

The millionaire had left his house that morning to meet his daughter in Philadelphia and come home with her.

As he came away hurriedly he had informed none of his servants of his intention save his valet, Moore, who was a man of about Mr. Baron's age, and very much his build.

The murdered man was therefore not Loyd Baron, but his valet, Moore, whom the assassins had mistaken for the millionaire himself.

The newspapers were out within the hour with thrilling accounts of the return of Loyd Baron and the murder of his faithful valet by mistake.

A tremendous sensation was created.

The effect of the dreadful news upon Mr. Baron and his daughter can hardly be imagined. The millionaire was horrified, and Gladys became hysterical with fear and renewed apprehension.

The return of Mr. Baron completely put a new face upon matters. His friends flocked to the house with happy congratulations, and the detectives were obliged to change their plans materially.

But it was very plain that the murderers had meant to strike at Mr. Baron. It was only by the merest chance that they had hit upon the unfortunate valet.

Of course Mr. Baron proposed to employ all human means to find the murderers. All the detectives available were at his disposal.

It now dawned upon him fully that he had secret foes who for some strange purpose meant to take his life.

"Why should they seek to kill me?" he asked in wonderment. "I have never harmed anybody, nor to my knowledge made an enemy."

In the midst of all the excitement Mr. Baron received a message.

Thus it read:

"Dear Mr. Baron—I think I can give you a clew to the mystery of the murder at your house. I am possessed of facts of value to you. Can I see you to-night at eight o'clock? I am at the Grand Hotel.

"BERTRAND LISCOMB."

Mr. Baron read this note with surprise.

"Liscomb!" he exclaimed, "what can he know about it? I do not trust the fellow. However, I will see him!"

Bertrand Liscomb was the dishonest clerk whom Mr. Baron had discharged.

The millionaire had discharged Liscomb and the clerk had vowed revenge for the same. This was the first that Mr. Baron had heard from him since.

There was a tinge of distrust in Mr. Baron's mind. But he decided to see Liscomb. He might possibly be sincere.

So he took a downtown car that evening. He called at the Grand Hotel.

He was shown to Liscomb's room.

The fellow was there, but he seemed to have struck prosperity since leaving the millionaire's employ, for he was sleek and well dressed.

"I am glad to meet you, Mr. Baron," he said, with apparently genuine warmth. "The last time we met our relations were not of the pleasantest, I know. I said some things for which I have since been sorry."

"That is of the past," said Mr. Baron with reserve. "We will let it remain there."

"But now circumstances are changed," resumed Liscomb. "I have been blessed by fortune and am prosperous. I fell heir to a large amount of money. I have marked out my career, and I desire to embellish it with noble and charitable deeds."

"A very good resolution."

"To be sure. Now, when I heard of the attack upon your life, which resulted in the death of your unfortunate valet, I was overcome with horror."

"It was a dreadful affair!"

"Indeed it was. The murderers should hang for it."

"They shall if I can catch them."

"And you can do that with my assistance."

"Yours?" exclaimed the millionaire.

"Yes!"

"I don't think I understand."

"I will be plain. I am possessed of facts which enable me to establish the identity of these secret assassins. Believe me, it is a terrible league of crime, and they never fail. They will not miss you the next time."

"My God!" exclaimed Mr. Baron. "Why do they seek my life?"

"I can give you the facts in a very short time. One thing I can assure you of. Your daughter will be the next victim."

The millionaire shuddered.

"This is terrible!" he cried. "It is a practice worthy of the past ages. It is barbarous! Who are these wretches, and how can they be defeated?"

"That I will tell you upon one condition," said Liscomb quietly.

"Name it! I am willing to pay any reasonable sum."

"Money is not what I want. Do you recall the fact that I once proposed to your daughter?"

"She declined your offer!"

"Yes, with scorn. When she knows that her father's life and hers are in my hands perhaps she will look upon me with more favor."

The millionaire's face grew apoplectic.

"What, you consummate scoundrel!" he cried furiously. "Dare you insult me with such a proposition?"

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MISSING HEIRESS.

Bertrand Liscomb's face was instantly overshadowed. A strange, steely glitter came into his eyes.



"It is not an insult for Bertrand Liscomb to offer his hand to the daughter of Loyd Baron!"

He spoke majestically.

"But it can never be!"

"That is all, then. Let matters take their course. I have imposed my condition. You may accept or decline as you choose."

"Then you have called me here to-night simply to make this proposition?" asked Mr. Baron coldly.

"This and no other."

"You have my answer."

"What?"

"Never!"

"Consider——"

"I have no intention of considering or even for a moment entertaining so infamous a proposal. Good day, sir!"

A few moments later Mr. Baron was in the street.

His whole being burned with resentment.

If there was any person on earth whom he disliked it was Bertrand Liscomb.

To think of his daring to propose for the hand of Gladys in such a manner, and under the guise of an implied threat, fired his whole being.

"I'll wager that scamp is one of the gang," he muttered. "Perhaps he is the ringleader and has singly taken this way of giving me warning that if I don't come to his terms he will have my life."

Thus angrily muttering to himself, Mr. Baron took an uptown train to his home. But as he entered the house he met Annette, a young girl who acted as maid to Gladys.

She was pale and frightened.

"Oh, Mr. Baron," she cried; "have you seen Gladys?"

"Gladys!" exclaimed the millionaire in a hollow voice. "Is she not at home?"

"We cannot find her anywhere. She went out a while ago without saying a word to any one, and that is unusual. I have Jenks, the butler, and Clark, the stableman, hunting the park over for her."

Now Gladys had been under close surveillance for a long while. This was at her own request. For when the strange impulse was overmastering her to follow the unseen power which seemed at times to draw her away it was necessary to employ forcible argument to enable her to overcome the strange hallucination. Mr. Baron knew this.

Cold sweat broke out upon him.

"Call the police, detectives!" he fairly shrieked. "Drag the city! Search everywhere! She must be found!"

He rushed from the house and fled down the street. He knew not where his footsteps carried him, but everywhere he looked for Gladys.

He made inquiry of every one he met.

And he was thus engaged when a ragged mendicant, who had been holding out his hat for pennies, came up and rasped his arm.

"Sh!" he said; "your daughter is safe."

Instantly Baron grasped the mendicant by the coat lapel.

"You, you!" he gasped. "Who are you? What do you now about her?"

"Sh!" said the mendicant, throwing back his coat and

showing a star. "Do not betray me. I am Old King Brady!"

The millionaire was overwhelmed.

"You!" he exclaimed; "Old King Brady. God be praised! You say my Gladys is safe?"

"Yes!"

"Where is she?"

"In that house across the street."

The millionaire looked and saw the stoop and front door of a brown-stone house. Heavy sash curtains were at the window.

He started to go thither pell mell.

But Old King Brady detained him.

"Sh!" he said. "Don't do such a foolish thing."

"Foolish!" gasped the excited parent.

"Yes."

"I want my daughter!"

"You shall have her."

"What is she doing there?"

"She has been enticed there!"

"Whose house is it?"

"A woman of questionable character named Meg Pierce."

Mr. Baron gave a gasp.

"And my Gladys in such a place!" And he tried to get away. But Old King Brady held him.

"Don't be a fool," whispered the old detective. "You'll spoil the whole game. We must bag the evil spirit."

"Evil spirit?"

"Yes, the fiend who has such a grip on your daughter as to be able to compel her to obey his will. He has compelled her to come to this house. He will come here to meet her and effect the abduction. We will then pounce upon him."

Mr. Baron was dumfounded.

"Then you know this creature—this being?" he asked.

"Certainly."

"What is it?"

"Only a human being, but one possessed of that strange power known as hypnotism."

"My Gladys the victim of hypnotism!" gasped Mr. Baron.

"She is only one of many victims. But fear not for her. We have our eye upon her. She is safe. See!"

Old King Brady made a slight signal to another mendicant on the other side of the street.

It was answered.

"Who is that?" asked Mr. Baron.

"Harry Brady."

"Young King Brady?"

"Yes, he is called that."

Mr. Baron became more resigned.

"You detectives are wonderful fellows," he said. "How did you learn that Gladys was in that house?"

"By a simple method. We have been her shadow since she came home. We followed her from your house."

"Wonderful!" cried the millionaire. "Why have you shadowed her?"

"For the very good reason that by following her we should surely be led to the very man we are desirous of getting our hands on."



"And he is——"

"We do not know his name. We have never even seen him. Our conclusions that he is a hypnotist are founded wholly upon the peculiar actions of your daughter."

"It is strange such a theory never occurred to me."

"That is true."

"But can the hypnotist exercise control over a subject at such a distance?"

"Easily, after having once come in contact with the subject."

"Ah, then the villain who is responsible for this dastardly game is some one who has met my daughter?"

"Yes, and probably formed a quite good acquaintance with her."

"Who can it be?" mused the millionaire.

"That we must ascertain."

"But his purpose?"

"It is easy to understand. Either he has formed a passion for her and means to compel her to marry him, or he is working out a revenge upon you. It is possible that ransom is the object."

"The inhuman wretch!" groaned Baron. "I wish I had hands upon him."

"We shall have him, I hope, very shortly. Can you recall any person who has proposed to your daughter and been rejected?"

"Bertrand Liscomb!" ejaculated Baron.

"Who?"

"He was a clerk of mine. I discharged him for dishonesty. I met him this very day by appointment at the Grand Hotel. He threatened me with dire things if I did not influence Gladys to marry him."

"What is that?" asked Old King Brady, with interest.

"Let me hear that again. What is his name? I believe he is the man we want."

Baron now in detail gave an account of his relations with Liscomb. The old detective made careful note of all.

"What do you think?" asked the millionaire, eagerly, as he finished. "Can Liscomb be the hypnotist?"

"Only time can decide," replied Old King Brady. "Ah! now comes the tug of war!"

The latter exclamation was induced by the appearance of a man in the street who walked under the lamp-light and mounted the steps of Meg Pierce's domicile.

He was closely muffled and moved with swiftness and stealth. Harry Brady, who was in the shadows, saw him plainly.

The fellow mounted the steps. The door opened and he went in.

In an instant Harry Brady gave Old King Brady the signal.

The old detective walked quickly to the corner to a police signal box.

In a moment he had sent word to the nearest police station. He turned to Mr. Baron and said:

"In less than ten minutes your daughter will be restored to you and we shall have the hypnotist in limbo."

"Good!" cried Mr. Baron, with delight. "You shall have a good reward."

Old King Brady had spoken truly. It was but a few moments ere the patrol wagon dashed into view.

In a few minutes Meg Pierce's house was surrounded completely.

That any of the inmates could escape seemed beyond possibility. Then Old King Brady mounted the steps.

He rapped loudly on the door.

To his surprise, it instantly swung open.

In the glare of the hall lamp he saw a woman of masculine appearance, with low projecting jaw, a sneering mouth and keen black eyes.

He knew her at once.

She knew him.

"Old King Brady!" she exclaimed.

"Meg Pierce," said the old detective. "We are after the man who just entered your house."

"This house?" exclaimed the woman, who was one of the shrewdest crooks in the female clique in New York.

"Yes, this house."

"There has not been a man in this house to-day."

"That is false!"

"What?"

"I saw him enter not five minutes ago."

"Impossible!" protested Meg Pierce. "I give you my oath."

Old King Brady smiled grimly.

He put a whistle to his mouth.

"Hold this woman," he said, as several officers came to his side. "We must enter and search this house."

Meg Pierce was held a prisoner and the search begun.

Up stairs and down, every room was examined. The police even went to the roof, and yet they were baffled.

Not a trace of Gladys Baron nor of the mysterious man they had seen enter the place could be found.

Old King Brady was chagrined.

Young King Brady could not believe his senses. He had been sure of the game.

Lloyd Baron was beside himself with disappointment and grief. He was like one insane.

"Search! search!" he cried. "Don't tell me that she is beyond recall. Oh, she must be found!"

But it was all in vain that the search was continued. Gladys Baron was a missing heiress.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE GREAT REWARD.

The two King Bradys had been outwitted.

In some mysterious manner Gladys Baron and her abductor had been spirited away from the house of Meg Pierce.

But where had they gone?

The woman protested vehemently that neither had been in her house that evening. She declared that she had never before heard of Gladys Baron.



Of course the detectives were not foolish enough to believe her assertions.

But they were obliged to release her.

There was not sufficient evidence upon which to hold her. Nor was there anything to be gained by doing so.

In fact, the Bradys chose rather to allow her liberty.

It would give them a chance to shadow her and yet gain an important clue, maybe.

All that night the search was kept up. Mr. Baron was like a maniac.

But, in spite of all efforts, no trace of Gladys Baron could be found.

She had dropped out of sight as effectually and as completely as if swallowed up by the waves of the great Atlantic.

But Old King Brady had struck a new lead. He told Young King Brady the story of Liscomb and his threats, as given him by Mr. Baron.

"That is the chap we want," declared the young detective at once.

"I believe it!" agreed Old King Brady.

"But I reckon he's a shrewd chap."

"Just so!"

"We will have to try underground work on him."

"Good disguises will do it."

"Yes."

The two detectives the next day shadowed Liscomb. He was at the Grand Hotel all that day.

He loafed about the office, smoking fine cigars and chatting with habitués of the place.

It was hard to associate him with the abduction of Gladys Baron, but the detectives remembered the story told by Loyd Baron.

But that evening a man sauntered into the lobby and conferred a few seconds with Liscomb. He was a stranger to the detectives, or at least, if known his disguise was complete.

They sized him up at once as a crook.

Old King Brady said:

"Liscomb will not leave here. Let us shadow this chap."

"Good!" agreed the younger detective.

So they followed the unknown to a narrow street on the East Side. And here they lost track of him.

All night they searched in vain; not a clue could be found.

When morning came Old King Brady drew himself up and said with conviction:

"Harry, my boy, there's a sharp crowd handling this job. We've got to do our prettiest. They are not greenhorns."

"Just my opinion," agreed the young detective.

"But we'll corner 'em yet."

"I reckon!"

A half hour later the two detectives were at their lodgings taking a much-needed two hours' nap.

Near the noon hour they arose and again went out onto the street.

Almost the first thing Young King Brady heard was a newsboy's voice:

"New York papers! All about the arrest at the Grand Hotel!"

"Eh, what's that?" exclaimed Old King Brady. "Get that paper, Harry."

Young King Brady secured the paper.

A glance at the heading was enough.

Both detectives gasped in dismay.

Thus they read:

"Startling Developments in the Gladys Baron Abduction Case! Arrest Made at the Grand Hotel of Bertrand Liscomb at the Instigation of the Deeply-grieved Father, Loyd Baron, Who Believes Liscomb the Abductor and Charges Him With Having Hypnotized His Daughter."

"Jupiter!" exclaimed Young King Brady. "That kills the case!"

Old King Brady looked glum.

It was easy to see that Baron had made a great mistake.

To arrest Liscomb could avail little, for there was not a tithe of direct evidence against him.

It would only strengthen him in every way to secure an acquittal and make it much more difficult to fathom his possible connection with the case.

"Too bad!" was Old King Brady's only comment. "He cannot be held."

And this was proven true that very afternoon. When Liscomb was taken before the judge for a hearing there was not the least bit of reliable evidence to hold him.

Mr. Baron repeated his conversation with the fellow in the Grand Hotel. But this stood for nothing.

"I can see no reason why this gentleman should be held on the charge preferred," said the judge. "I must order him discharged."

And, with a mocking smile of triumph, Liscomb left the dock.

Mr. Baron, with pallid face, now saw his mistake.

But he was unswerving in his determination to run down the dastardly abductor of his daughter.

So the evening papers all held a thrilling advertisement. It is safe to say that it was the only and the largest reward of the kind ever offered.

### "ONE MILLION DOLLARS REWARD!"

"I will pay a reward of one million dollars in gold or currency or bonds to the man or person, detective or otherwise, who will restore to me, safe and sound, my stolen daughter Gladys and bring to justice the party or parties who are responsible for her cowardly abduction.

"(Signed)

LOYD BARON."

This created an astounding sensation. The enormity of the reward, the well-known integrity of the man who offered it, proved inducements to an army of detectives, itinerant and otherwise.

New York city was ransacked; not a hole or corner but what was explored.

For days police circles were in a ferment.

But nothing came of it.

Gladys Baron was not restored.

Her abductor was not traced.

All still remained a mystery.



Bertrand Liscomb walked the streets coolly and set at defiance all suspicion directed toward him.

The Big Six seemed to have vanished as completely as if dissolved in thin air. Even Meg Pierce was missing.

The police and detectives had absolutely no clue to work upon.

All idea of Liscomb's connection with the affair had been abandoned by the police.

The two King Bradys also had dropped from sight.

Mr. Baron had sought Old King Brady high and low. He wanted to consult the two keen detectives.

But they could not be found.

The disappearance of Gladys Baron and the million dollar reward was the theme of excited discussion in all circles. Interest ran high.

Thus matters were when, one day, Bertrand Liscomb emerged from the Grand Hotel and stood for a moment looking up and down Broadway.

He seemed in a preoccupied state of mind. He swung a cane and twirled a monocle over his thumb.

Across the street a veiled lady separated herself from the throng of passers and crossed over, passing by the villain.

Liscomb gave her only a casual glance. There was no reason for distinguishing her from any other woman passing that way.

She entered the hotel by the ladies' entrance. It was hardly two minutes later, and Liscomb yet stood in front of the hotel, when a porter came out and touched his arm.

"Mr. Liscomb?"

"Yes," exclaimed the villain, turning.

"A lady is in the parlor who wishes to see you, sir."

"A lady?"

"Yes, sir."

Liscomb was surprised.

Who could his visitor be?

Then he thought of Meg Pierce.

"It is probably her," he muttered. "What can she want?"

But he lost no time in at once answering the request. He made his way at once to the ladies' parlor.

As he entered he gave a start.

A slender woman, deeply veiled, sat there. To his wonderment he saw that she was the woman who had passed him at the hotel entrance.

She arose as he entered.

He lifted his hat.

"I am Bertrand Liscomb," he said. "Do you wish to see me?"

"I do, sir," she replied in a low contralto voice. "You do not know me?"

"I must say that you have the advantage of me," replied Liscomb; "though I cannot see your face."

She raised the veil.

Liscomb saw regular features and a strong face, with a complexion of the olive cast. The eyebrows were darkly lined and the hair was raven black. She was rather good-looking.

"Ah!" he said, scanning her face. "I have never seen you before."

"But you must have heard of me."

"You are——"

"I am Jennie Duke, or known generally as Black Jennie, the shoplifter. Sh! do not betray me. I have to keep dark for fear of the police."

Liscomb was astonished.

"Black Jennie!" he ejaculated. "Well, you are rightly named. But what on earth do you want with me?"

"To do business."

"Business?"

"Yes."

"Please be more explicit. Who sent you here, and what is your business?"

"You know Howard Spero?"

"One of the Big Six? Yes."

"Well, he and I are partners in any crooked deal. He told me to come and see you about a job you want done—you know—it is the banker, Baron. I can do it for you."

Liscomb's features were inscrutable a moment. He drew a deep breath.

Then he looked furtively about.

They were alone.

The great parlor held no other occupants.

He sank into a chair. Fixing a penetrative gaze upon his visitor, he said in a low voice:

"So Howard Spero sent you here?"

"That's what I said."

"Well, Jennie, what assurance can you give me that you can do that job?"

"You will be sufficiently assured when it is done?"

"Of course."

"Well, that is the assurance I will give you. I will do it."

Liscomb's eyes glittered.

"How do you purpose to work?" he asked.

"I am a woman and can approach my man with less suspicion than a man. I am resolute and desperate, and I shall not fail. Black Jennie never did fail. Now to business. What sum do you propose to pay me?"

## CHAPTER VI.

### MR. BARON RECEIVES A SURPRISE.

Liscomb stroked his mustache.

"One thousand dollars," he said.

She shook her head.

"Not enough."

"What do you ask?"

"Five thousand."

"Will it be sure?"

"Sure."

"Well, you shall have it. But there must be no fail."

"You need not fear," said Black Jennie, letting a keen dirk knife slide out of her sleeve. "I know how to fix him. But you must pay me!"

"When the job is done."



"You want him to die instantly?"

"The quicker the better!"

The shoplifter replaced the dirk and whispered:

"Where is the rendezvous?"

"The what?"

"The rendezvous. I want to see Howard. I have not seen him for a long while. I want his assistance."

"The Big Six are in Boston."

"In Boston, Massachusetts?"

"Yes."

"Humph! that is too bad. I will have to do the job first and all alone. But my plan is laid."

Liscomb was interested.

"What is it?" he asked.

The shoplifter lowered her voice.

"I will tell you," she whispered. "I shall send a bogus message purporting to come from Boston. When Baron receives it he will believe it from a detective in Boston at present, who demands that he come on at once and take charge of Gladys. See?"

"And this detective——"

"Is Old King Brady."

Liscomb's eyes glittered.

"Splendid!" he said. "You thus decoy him——"

"Yes—to the Fall River steamer. I shall be on board that. If I had Howard to aid me all would be easy. But I must go it alone."

"But, on board the steamer—what?"

Black Jennie shrugged her shoulders. Again she showed her knife.

"There will be a missing passenger at Fall River," she said, grimly.

"But——"

"What?"

"Suppose he goes on the cars?"

"He will not do that. The message will bid him meet Old King Brady at the boat landing in Fall River."

Liscomb whistled shrilly.

"Good for you, Jennie," he said. "You are a hummer. I am proud to know you."

The shoplifter lowered her veil and laughed softly.

"By the way," she said, in her insinuating way, "where shall I find the boys of the Big Six in Boston? Is not Howard with them?"

"He is," replied Liscomb. "Go to No. —— North Street. Rap on the black door four distinct raps. Then speak the word 'Omega.'"

"I shall find Howard there?"

"Yes."

"Very good! I will go out and send the message to Loyd Baron now. When next you hear from me all will be over."

"Good!" cried Liscomb, delightedly. "I trust you will not fail."

"I shall not. Farewell!"

"Farewell!"

Drawing her veil close, the shoplifter left the hotel. She soon mingled with the crowd on Broadway.

It was not yet noon.

Loyd Baron was at his residence in upper New York when there came a ring at the doorbell.

A moment later a servant brought in a Western Union message. It appeared to be properly marked and dated and was prepaid.

It was dated at Boston, Mass.

Thus it read:

"Loyd Baron, Esq.:

"I have at last got the trail. Come to Boston via Fall River steamer to-night. You shall meet your daughter.

"OLD KING BRADY."

The millionaire read and reread the message like one in a dream. The effect upon him was magical.

"Found! found!" he cried, overwhelmed with joy; "and by Old King Brady! Well, there is no one to whom I had rather pay that million dollars."

He dashed down town to his office and informed his clerks that he intended proceeding to Boston by the Fall River boat that night.

His arrangements were quickly made.

Then, at 4:30 o'clock, he was on board the big steamer Puritan.

He secured a stateroom.

As the Puritan swung round into the East river upon her voyage up the Sound, Loyd Baron paced the deck, as happy a man as there was in America.

He stood by the rail and watched the lights o' Gotham fade from view.

While standing there a heavily veiled woman approached him from behind. She pressed so closely to his shoulder that he turned.

Murmuring an apology, he moved further away.

To his surprise, she drew nearer.

The millionaire regarded her curiously a moment. Then he turned and entered the steamer salon.

The veiled woman followed closely behind him.

Mr. Baron reached his stateroom door and put the key in the lock.

As the door swung back he was jostled, and to his sheer amazement the veiled woman brushed past him and into the stateroom.

Astounded, the millionaire exclaimed:

"Madam, are you not mistaken? This is my stateroom."

"Come in here. I want to speak to you," said the veiled woman.

Baron instinctively drew back and a suspicion of the woman's sanity crossed his mind.

He turned his head to look for an attendant. But as he did so the veiled woman caught him by the arm and pulled him into the stateroom.

The door was slammed and she stood with her back to it. Then she raised her veil.

"Loyd Baron, do you know me?" she asked.

The millionaire felt a cold sweat upon him.

"I never saw you before in my life," he declared. "What does this mean?"

The woman laughed.

Then she made a quick motion and the skirts dropped



at her feet. The hat and veil were whirled off and a wig followed.

The swarthy complexion would only have yielded to soap and water. But the transformation already effected was enough.

Mr. Baron gave a sharp cry.

"Young King Brady!" he gasped.

The young detective, for Black Jennie, the shoplifter, was really Young King Brady in a clever disguise, laughed merrily.

"I gave you a startling surprise, didn't I, Mr. Baron?" he cried.

Whew!" exclaimed the banker, in amazement. "I should say you did! What on earth does this mean?"

"You are going to Boston?"

"Yes."

"Well," said the young detective, quietly but impressively, "you must not reach there alive."

Mr. Baron rubbed his eyes.

Was he dreaming?

Had he heard aright?

"Eh?" he exclaimed. "Did I understand you?"

"You must not reach Boston alive."

The young detective spoke clearly.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed the millionaire. "Are you insane?"

Young King Brady laughed.

"Perhaps I ought to explain," he said. "You are on your way to Boston to meet Old King Brady in response to a despatch from him."

"Yes."

"Well, that despatch was a subterfuge."

Mr. Baron's face paled.

"What!" he ejaculated. "Then I have been deceived?"

"There was a little deception, but a great end has been gained. When I say you must not reach Boston alive I mean that you must not be seen to leave this boat, and for a time at least you must be considered among the missing. Do you understand?"

Mr. Baron nodded wearily.

"Gladys," he asked. "Is she in Boston?"

"I have reason to believe that she is all safe. The assistance you can render me now will contribute largely toward her safe return to you."

"Do you mean it?" asked Mr. Baron, eagerly.

"I do."

"Then I will follow your directions to the letter. Oh, you detectives are sharp fellows. I suppose this is a game to ensnare the villains?"

"It is."

And Young Brady explained all now to the millionaire, including his visit to Liscomb at the Grand Hotel and the complete deception of that arch villain.

Mr. Baron at once entered into the spirit of the scheme.

"What do you expect of me?" he asked.

"You must leave the boat in deep disguise. You must leave your satchel and your effects scattered in your stateroom. The key must be lost. All things must tend to your loss overboard. Do you see?"

"Exactly."

"A great sensation will ensue. You will be heralded in the newspapers as a missing man. It will force Liscomb to show his hand. He will believe that Black Jennie did her work well, and that you are dead."

"What a scheme!"

"In the meantime I have gained knowledge of the stopping place of the Big Six in Boston. By shadowing them we shall find Gladys."

"Where is Old King Brady?"

"He was in Washington on a false scent. But I have wired him and he will be in Boston some time to-morrow."

"And I——"

"You shall remain quietly incog. and in disguise at some hotel. Leave everything else to Old King Brady and myself."

Baron grasped the young detective's hand and wrung it.

"I have all confidence in you," he cried. "I shall obey you."

It was a brilliant coup which Young King Brady had made. It seemed as if he was about to win his case in one long stride.

A few moments later he left Mr. Baron's stateroom.

But before he left he had disguised the millionaire so that his closest friend would not have known him.

A wig and beard, with a complexion dye, accomplished this.

Then the stateroom was fixed to bear out the supposition that the millionaire had occupied it and had left it temporarily, locking the door after him.

This would intensify the mystery of his disappearance and go far to substantiate the murder theory.

## CHAPTER VII.

### IN BOSTON.

Then Young King Brady also made a change in his own personal appearance.

He discarded his disguise as Black Jennie, the shoplifter.

He became a tall, respectable-looking young man in black.

Thus the two left Mr. Baron's stateroom, locking the door after them.

Young King Brady went to his own stateroom and stowed his shoplifter's disguise away in his gripsack.

They walked out on deck and chatted until a late hour. Then they retired to Young King Brady's stateroom and slept until morning.

The boat was in the dock when they arose. Leisurely they dressed themselves and sauntered out on deck.

People were hustling to get the train for Boston.

"What shall we do?" asked Mr. Baron.

"We might as well go on to Boston," said Young King Brady. "We can gain nothing by remaining here."

"But the stateroom——"



"The state of affairs there will not be discovered until later in the day. We shall hear about it probably in the evening papers."

"Very good. It is for you to give the direction for procedure."

"We will go on to Boston."

So they seated themselves in the vestibule train and were soon being whirled away toward Massachusetts Bay.

When they finally reached Boston Young King Brady despatched the following telegram:

"Bertrand Liscomb, Grand Hotel, New York City:

"All is well. Shall see you later. JENNIE."

Young King Brady and Mr. Baron proceeded at once to the Adams House, on Washington street. They registered, of course, under other names than their own.

"Now what shall we do?" asked Mr. Baron. "Go down to North street?"

"Not yet," replied Young King Brady.

"But delay——"

"Is not dangerous in this instance. The reported disappearance of Loyd Baron on the Fall River steamer will lull the gang into security. Before I act further I must await the coming of Old King Brady."

"He will be here soon?"

"I wired him to his address in Washington. If he took the first train, he should be here this afternoon."

Young King Brady and Mr. Baron seated themselves in a retired corner of the hotel lobby.

Here they could observe everything and be little observed. The young detective occupied himself making copious notes in his notebook.

At this moment a newsboy entered the lobby.

The clock marked the hour of three.

"Extra! extra! All about the man lost on the Puritan!" Mr. Baron gave a spasmodic start.

"There you are," whispered Young King Brady. "Buy the paper."

The millionaire did so.

On the front page was a large caption.

Then followed a long account of the mysterious disappearance of Mr. Loyd Baron, the New York millionaire, from his stateroom on board the Puritan.

All sorts of theories were expounded by the analytical reporters.

It was assumed in one paragraph that Baron had been the victim of foul play.

In another it was deemed probable that he had fallen overboard accidentally and unseen. Then followed the suicide theory.

Mr. Baron laughed.

"It is a puzzle for them," he cried.

"A puzzle for the people, but"—and Young King Brady rubbed his hands gleefully, "how it will shut the eyes of the gang. We have them fooled!"

"You are right."

But now the young detective sprang to his feet with an exclamation of joy.

A man had entered the lobby.

He was tall and strongly built, in spite of the fact that he was along in years. He walked with supple tread.

He wore the uniform of a Salvation Army exhorter.

He passed unnoticed through the crowd and seemed to instantly single out Young King Brady and Mr. Baron.

He came straight up to them.

"Hello, Harry! How d'ye do, Mr. Baron? You see I am here!"

It was Old King Brady.

It is needless to say that the old detective was warmly welcomed by the two.

"Now," cried the young detective, "we can corral the gang!"

With this Young King Brady detailed his scheme and how it had succeeded thus far. The old detective listened with astonishment and interest.

"On my word!" he ejaculated. "You have done well, Harry. It is the best thing you ever did. Why, we have them on the hip."

The old detective indorsed all of Harry Brady's ideas. There remained nothing more to be done now but to pay a visit to the gang in North street.

It was decided to go thither in disguise.

Old King Brady was to retain his character of the Salvation Army exhorter, and Young King Brady was to make himself up as a young curate.

They could thus visit the slums under the pretense of a mission of charity, which would insure some degree of safety and no suspicion.

They repaired quietly to Mr. Baron's room, where the disguise was effected.

"We shall hope to give you some news of your daughter at an early moment," said Young King Brady.

"I live in that hope," replied the millionaire.

Then the two detectives left the Adams House. Turning from Washington street, they entered Dock square and soon had reached the lower end of North street.

They walked along carelessly, inspecting the numbers on the doors.

From early times North street has ever been noted as the rendezvous of crooks and thugs. It is the most notorious thoroughfare in Boston.

Suddenly the two detectives came to a dilapidated house with a retreating hallway. At its end was a black door.

Its windows were half shattered and stuffed with rags and refuse. No living being was visible in or about the place.

It was a silent, dismal, tumble-down old rookery and seemed to be both uninhabited and uninhabitable.

This was the hiding place of the Big Six at present.

At least, if Bertrand Liscomb had told Young King Brady the truth. There was little reason to doubt it.

The two detectives turned into the dark and filthy hallway.

They tried the ramshackle old door.

It yielded, and Old King Brady pushed it open. The two detectives stood at the foot of a creaking and much worn stairway.

Still there was no evidence of human occupancy. No furniture of any kind was seen—no table or chair.



All was silence.

Neither detective spoke, except by means of the deaf and dumb alphabet.

"What shall we do?" asked Young King Brady on his fingers.

"Go ahead," replied Old King Brady.

So they started up the creaking stairs.

How they creaked and groaned!

The noise must have been heard in every part of the old structure. Up to the first landing went the detectives.

An open door here showed them the interior of a room.

But it was empty.

Through each room on that floor they went. They were all empty. On the passage wall was a dingy sign:

"Rooms to Let on this Floor. Inquire nex Dore."

Old King Brady's keen eyes did not allow anything to escape. He studied the floors and the walls and the ceilings. He was shrewdly critical.

Up the next flight of stairs the two detectives went. They found themselves in a dark passageway.

All the doors on that floor were closed.

Were the rooms occupied?

The dust on the stairs seemed to dispute this assumption. But Old King Brady turned the knob of the nearest door.

It yielded and the door swung back.

As it did so a most startling spectacle met the gaze of the detectives.

They saw the interior of a meanly-furnished room.

With difficulty light struggled in through the few whole panes of glass. It was a miserable, squalid chamber.

But, unlike the others, it was occupied.

And in a manner most surprising to the detectives. Six chairs were against the wall in a semi-circle. A table stood in the centre of the room.

In each chair sat a man with a black mask on his face. Each man held a revolver, which covered the two detectives.

The tableau was a most thrilling one. For some seconds the two detectives stood there in the doorway as if glued to the threshold.

Then Young King Brady made a slight move as if to draw back. But a steely voice said:

"Stand where you are!"

The young detective stood still.

But by this time both detectives had embraced the exigencies of the situation and were equal to them.

Their faces betrayed only open-eyed wonder. There was no comprehension of the situation in their features.

One was a Salvation Army exhorter, the other was a slum-visiting little curate. That was all.

"Well, James, we'd better go, I guess," wheedled Young King Brady. "We can find little appreciation of our charities among these worldly creatures."

"Praise Zion!" groaned Old King Brady.

At this a hoarse laugh escaped the six masked men. One of them arose and took a step forward.

"Look here," he said sharply, "what 'brought you in here?"

"A mission of mercy," droned Old King Brady. "We

seek to do good to our fellow-beings and will pray for you if you ask it."

"Ye needn't trouble yerself," sneered the spokesman.

"Yer prayers wouldn't save me. I'm past that."

The other masked men roared with laughter.

"Pray fer him, Sally."

"Sing us a song."

"Whar's yer tambourine?"

"Hit 'em up fer Glory!"

These and a score of other cries filled the air. But the spokesman checked them.

"Hold on!" he growled. "I want to size these chaps up. Hev ye ever been here before?"

"Praise the Lord, no!" replied Young King Brady, with a pious upward look. "But it is plain that our prayers are sadly needed."

"Listen to the call of Zion!" began Old King Brady. Then, clapping his hands together, he sang in a droning way:

"We're traveling up Zion

For the glory of the Lord.

We're traveling up Zion

For to preach His holy word."

"Dry up!" shouted the masked spokesman, savagely. "We don't want no hymns around here. Now, you git out jest as quick as ye kin, if ye don't want a broken neck. Git, I say!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SHADOWING THE GANG.

The pseudo Salvation exhorter and his companion seemed nothing loth to obey this command.

They slid away from the door instantly and made for the stairs. Then the door of the chamber closed with a slam.

The masked gang were relieved of their pious visitors.

At the landing, however, Old King Brady whispered:

"Go down the stairs with a great clatter. I will remain here."

Young King Brady caught the idea at once.

Down the stairs he went.

The racket he made was sufficient for all purposes. When he reached the lower hall he paused.

Old King Brady had remained above. The young detective was for a moment undecided how to act.

He finally concluded to examine the rear of the building. So silently he glided through the passage to the area beyond.

He found himself in a dingy, filthy court, paved with cobbles.

Up the back of the building was a rusty fire escape. The young detective took all this in and then went back into the lower hall.

He sat down in a dark corner and waited. His purpose was a shrewd one.



The day was rapidly waning and darkness was at hand. It would be easier to work then.

Moreover, he was within call should Old King Brady need him, which he knew was not beyond the range of possibility.

So Young King Brady remained thus, waiting his time for action.

Old King Brady had flattened himself into a dark corner of the upper hallway.

He had scarcely done so, however, when the door of the chamber opened and one of the masked men came out.

He leaned over the stair rail and listened to the clatter on the stairs.

"Have they gone, Mike?" asked a voice from the chamber.

"Wall, I should smile," replied the ruffian, "an' I'll bet yew they won't cum in here ag'in lookin' fer converts. They've got a good skeer!"

"It's all right if they don't put the police onto us."

"They can't do it unless they go to Headquarters. Mickey Burns is on this beat, an' he an' Tom Lawton, of the next, are all fixed. It's straight goods!"

"Wall, cum in, then, Mike, an' let's get down ter business!"

The door closed and only the dull murmur of voices came from the chamber beyond.

Old King Brady drew a deep breath.

Now, if there was one thing he desired it was to know what the subject of conversation was in that chamber.

He was determined to know it also, if possible.

He knew that the villain who had come out was no other than the famous crook, Mike McCue.

The others in the chamber were, of course, members of the Big Six.

Now, Old King Brady might have made then and there the biggest "scoop" of the season in criminal records.

That is, if any kind of luck was his. For it would have been a comparatively easy matter to have brought a posse of officers down on the gang.

But the time was not yet come for such action.

He was working for another purpose as well.

The hypnotist and abductor of Gladys Baron was not yet placed. To lock up the Big Six would accomplish nothing in the clearing of that mystery.

The shadow game was still Old King Brady's, and he was not so foolish as to abandon it.

But he must plan to in some way overhear the conversation in the chamber beyond.

To creep up to the door and attempt to listen through the keyhole was dangerous in the extreme.

At any moment the door might be opened upon him. That would mean the ruin of his plans.

For the detective knew that none of these villains suspected the presence of the Bradys in Boston.

They believed themselves wholly safe and secure. It was much better to allow them to think so.

But it did not take Old King Brady long to hit upon a plan.

There was another room adjoining the one in which the villains were.

The building was a wooden structure, with partitions of

the thinnest boards. Such buildings are shams at best and the slightest sounds are heard from one chamber to the other.

The detective reached into his pocket and drew forth a pair of pliable rubber soles.

These were so constructed as to fit upon the bottom of his shoes and make the tread noiseless. He quickly adjusted them.

Then he was ready for work. Like a shadow he crossed the passage.

Silently he tried the door.

It yielded to pressure, and noiselessly the detective swung it back. It was in his favor that the hinges did not creak.

He was now in the adjoining room.

There was yet light enough of day left for him to see that there was a fireplace on that side of the room.

He crept up to it and placed his ear to the partition. There was a circular hole through which a stove funnel had once passed.

It was filled with rags. Very gently the old detective pulled these out.

He experienced a thrill of satisfaction. Every word, even in the lowest key, spoken in the adjoining room came to him.

He could also partly see what was going on in there. He now rested with his shoulder to the wall.

He took in eagerly the entire exciting conversation. It was the most important revelation of the whole case which the detective now heard.

"I tell ye lads," Mike McCue was saying, "we've got no friends out of our own circle. An' thar's one in it I don't trust altogether. Yew know who I mean?"

A murmur went up.

"Wall, I'll speak out, then. That man is Number Six, or rather, as he chooses to be called, the Unknown."

"Ye're solid, Mike!"

"He's out of our class!"

"He's too slick!"

"He'll turn us down yet."

"Jest so, mates! Now, that's why I brought Jim Bendon here to-night to take ther place of ther Unknown. He'll be our Number Six from this on."

A murmur of approval followed.

"Now, Jim," McCue said, "you can make yer little speech. It's in luck you are to get in with ther Big Six."

One of the ruffians rose.

"Gents an' brothers," he said, "I want to tell ye thet I'm proud to be with ye. I'll stick by ye troo thick an' thin, or ye can slit my gullet. Thet's all!"

A chorus of cries of approval went up.

"Good fer Number Six!"

"He's all right!"

"He's a winner!"

"Now, brothers," went on McCue, "thet question is settled. The next is what action are we goin' to take in regard to ther deposed member. Of course we hain't notified him yit, an' it's jest as well not to. Ther membership is limited to six. He has become superfluous. His ideas ain't oorn. He is too high toned in his notions, an' he'll git us into a scrape through abductin' that ere gal yet. An'



what's more, he's in league with the devil if ever a man was. I'm afeard of these doggoned hypnotists, or whatever ye call 'em. Now, what do ye say? We've dropped the name of ther Unknown from our roll as Number Six. Will we drop him as well as his name?"

A hoarse roar went up.

"Knife him!"

"Dead men can't do no harm!"

"Slide him off easy!"

"That settles it," cried McCue, triumphantly. "We'll appoint a committee to do ther job."

"You're one!"

"All right, I'll be one. I want two more men. Will you serve, Val Smith?"

"You bet!"

"And you, Sharkey?"

"I'm yer man!"

"Thet's all!" cried McCue. "Thet upstart Liscomb will be missin' one of these mornings, an' what's more, he won't know it."

"But the gal," shouted Danton.

"Oh, yas, the gal!" exclaimed McCue. "What'll we do with ther gal?"

"Meg has got her."

"All safe?"

"Jest so! I tell ye, thet old millionaire has offered a million fer her. Can't some of us masquerade as detectives an' git thet million?"

A chorus of approval went up, but one demurring voice was heard.

"Ye can't do it!"

All eyes were turned upon the speaker.

"What's ther matter, Sharkey?"

"I tell ye, them detectives, Old King Grady and his pal, they'll do us. Yew can't beat 'em."

There was an ominous pause.

Then McCue's voice arose.

"Thar's a way to do it," he cried. "We're six an' they're only two. We must do 'em! The two Bradys must die!"

To all this the old detective had listened with varied emotions.

It was a revelation to him of the most intense kind. Indeed, it seemed to put a complete new face upon matters.

Not until this moment had he even suspected the existence of any secret cabal against Liscomb by the other members of the Big Six.

He saw at once that McCue was the leading spirit of the gang.

It was easy to read between the lines and see the purpose of McCue. He was no doubt impelled by jealous hatred of Liscomb.

Old King Brady ran these matters swiftly over in his mind.

It was not possible for him to as yet shape his own plans. But he knew that he must modify them.

He had heard of the crook Bendon who had been adopted as Number Six of the gang in Liscomb's place.

He was of the same type as the others and a worthy companion of theirs.

He smiled at the declaration by the gang that the two Bradys must die.

"Forewarned is forearmed!" he muttered grimly.

It had now grown very dark.

The light of day had given way to the gloom of night. Old King Brady felt a trifle safer.

But even as he was congratulating himself upon this fact an unexpected incident occurred.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A LONG CHASE.

Old King Brady had failed to notice that a door connected the two rooms.

It was so closely set in the partition that a casual glance might not reveal it.

But close observation could not fail to discern it. The ruffians had risen and were now walking about the room.

Suddenly the partition door opened.

A flood of lamp light came streaming through. Whoever opened it stood a moment on the threshold.

His head was turned and he was talking to the others in the room. That very act saved Old King Brady.

At that moment he had given himself up for lost.

But, as the ruffian did not at the moment glance into the room, the detective had just time to glide swiftly and noiselessly into the passage.

But it was only from the frying pan into the fire, so far as discovery went. But of course his chances for escape were better.

For the door into the hall now opened and let a blaze of light out there also.

Two of the gang came out.

They spoke words of adieu to the others and then passed along the hallway. The detective flattened himself in the shadows in the corner.

"Say, Sharkey, you and Danton must see Meg to-night. Do ye understand?"

It was McCue's voice.

"All right!" replied O'Shane.

"We'll meet again to-morrow afternoon. Be on hand!"

"All right!"

The two villains, O'Shane and Danton, brushed past Old King Brady without seeing him.

It was a close call.

Down the stairs they went.

The detective hesitated. Should he shadow them or remain and watch the rest of the gang?

He longed at that moment to communicate with Young King Brady. It decided him, and he started noiselessly down the stairs.

It was a difficult thing to descend without attracting the attention of the two men whom he was pursuing. But he managed to do it.

O'Shane and Danton passed out onto the street.



Old King Brady looked about for Young King Brady. But the junior detective did not put in an appearance.

"Well," thought Old King Brady, "it must stand as it is. Certainly I cannot afford to lose this lead."

He knew that they were going to Meg Pierce's place of hiding and where Gladys Baron was held a captive.

It was Old King Brady's prime desire to rescue the millionaire's daughter as quickly as possible. He believed that it was his first duty.

So he did not risk losing his trail for the chance of seeing Young King Brady.

He went on after O'Shane and Danton. They were now turning into Dock square.

Old King Brady followed them through various streets until they reached Atlantic avenue.

Here the two villains entered the ferry house which connects with the Revere Beach and Lynn Railroad. They went on board the ferry boat.

The detective was close behind them.

But when the ferry boat left the slip the old detective got in some dark shadows behind a team in the driveway of the boat and made a change in his appearance.

By dexterous turning of his coat inside out and replacing the Salvation Army cap with his own soft felt hat, he became once more Old King Brady.

He kept out of sight of the two villains.

But when they boarded the Revere Beach train he was close behind them.

Soon the train was speeding rapidly out across the marshes of Saugus. Near the great State highway which here furnishes a fine boulevard is a resort known to campers and beach frequenters as the Point of Pines.

The train stopped at the little station, and O'Shane and Danton got off. The detective did the same.

The pavilions and dance halls of the resort were in full blaze. Music of bands floated out upon the air and the people thronged the illuminated grounds.

The two villains, however, passed by the place and struck out in the gloom along the shore.

The dull booming of the waves was almost at their feet. They strode on for some distance.

Then an intense disappointment was accorded Old King Brady. He lost sight of them completely.

In vain he searched.

His best endeavors only brought him to the waters of a little creek which extended far up through the treacherous marshes.

The creek was wide and deep and muddy. It was not possible that they had waded it.

There was no bridge or other visible means of crossing. On one side were the quagmires of the marsh; on the other the booming sea.

But one solution of the problem was logical.

A boat must have been employed to cross the creek, or else they had rowed out into the bay. In any case the detective could not follow them. He was at a standstill.

This was a bitter pill for Old King Brady. He was deeply chagrined.

There was no boat in the vicinity, however, and even if

there had been he would have been at a loss to know which way to row to get track of the villains.

It began to look as if Loyd Baron's daughter would not be rescued that night. But even as he was cogitating vainly over the matter, Old King Brady heard a low whistle.

It came seemingly from the interior of the marsh.

Then a dull murmur of voices was heard and a door was violently closed. The detective's nerves tingled.

"There they are!" he muttered.

His keen ears had located the sounds. He pressed his way through the marsh grass, and suddenly his foot struck a plank.

Then he saw what he had overlooked before.

It was a plank walk leading through the marsh grass. He instantly followed it.

One hundred yards he walked it; then he came to a small island in the marsh. Sometimes in high water this island must be entirely surrounded.

There were a few scrub trees and a dilapidated cabin. In the window of this gleamed a light.

The detective cautiously crept nearer to this. Soon he had reached the dingy window itself.

It seemed to be the habitation of some nomad of the shore who made his living by clam digging or reclamation of wreckage. There were many such scattered along the coast.

Old King Brady heard the murmur of voices in the cabin.

He crept nearer to the cabin window and cautiously peered in. The scene which met his gaze gave him a thrill.

There were three people in the cabin.

Two of them were O'Shane and Danton. The other was the woman Meg Pierce.

The hut was rudely furnished, and fishing nets and trawls were hanging from the walls and the rafters.

A fire gleamed in a rickety stove, and about this the crooked trio sat, smoking and talking.

The old detective could hear every word spoken.

What he did hear was to him a thrilling revelation. He experienced a thrill of triumph, for he already saw the reward of a million won.

"So the boys have gone back on Liscomb?" asked Meg Pierce in her shrill voice. She lit her pipe and puffed away at it in a stoical way.

"Ye can't blame 'em!" asserted Danton with an oath. "He is a two-faced hyena. He's jest workin' fer Liscomb, an' he'll t'row us down any time he feels like it."

"You bet he will," agreed O'Shane.

"Humph!" said the old hag. "That's all right, but I'm in this job fer money. I've risked a good deal to git this gal. Ther detectives hev been hot on my trail."

"Yer safe enough here!"

"Waal, ye might think so. But there's them King Bradys. They've got eyes in the back of ther heads. An' they're right arter me. I'm only goin' to stay here another day."

"You ain't heerd what is proposed to be done by ther Big Six," said Danton.



"Eh?" exclaimed Meg. "Are ye really goin' to break away from Liscomb?"

"Yaas."

"But—what about the gal?"

"Her father has offered a cool million fer her return!"

Meg Pierce dropped her pipe and faced the speaker. Her crime-hardened face lengthened and her eyes glistened like beads.

"Eh!" she exclaimed in a changed voice. "A million fer that gal's return? He kin pay it?"

"He's worth three or four million."

The woman drew a deep, hard breath.

"An' I've got the gal," she said, as if to herself. "A million is a heap of money. What's to bar me?"

Out from her blouse came a shining revolver. The two villains sprang up.

"Hands up!"

Both of them held up their hands.

"What are ye tryin' ter do, Meg?" said Danton angrily. "You can't claim that million all alone. What's more, you don't need so much money. The Big Six will do the fair thing by ye. But it must be an equal division."

The woman's gaze was inscrutable.

"Among seven of us?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Is it square?"

"On the square!"

Meg Pierce lowered her pistol. She picked up her pipe and relit it. Then she sat over the fire crooning for some moments.

"All right," she said finally. "It's done. We'll break away from Liscomb. But the gal—she's under the spell yet."

"Is she here yet?" asked Danton.

Meg Pierce turned and whistled.

"Here, my tender lamb," she cried. "Come out of your fold. We want to take a peep at ye. Come out, I say!"

There was a movement in the inner room. Then a hanging made of sail cloth parted and a vision appeared. It was like a shining pearl in a sty of swine.

Gladys Baron, like one in a somnambulistic state, walked out into the presence of the crooks.

Her yellow hair fell down over her partly bared shoulders. Her sweet face was pale like marble, and her eyes strangely vacant.

She put forth her hands as if feeling her way. The spell of the hypnotic fiend was yet upon her.

But he refrained.

It was not yet time.

The two villains, Danton and O'Shane, gazed upon the entranced girl with brutal admiration, half mingled with awe.

"By the shades of Pluvius!" ejaculated Danton. "She's a beauty! There ain't nothin' in art to beat her! She's a Venus!"

Danton was an educated villain. O'Shane could not view the young girl captive with the same species of appreciation.

"Hang me!" he exclaimed, "she's too tender an' delicate for such a wolf as that Liscomb."

"That she is," agreed Meg, with an emphatic nod.

"Bah! They're only toys, them kind of wimmen. What's she good for? Only a wax doll!"

"What does Liscomb want of her?" asked Danton.

Meg shrugged her shoulders.

"One of his victims," she replied. "He says he'll make her his wife. But Heaven help her when he tires of her. He's a devil! There'll soon be another in her place."

"It is too condemned bad!" declared Danton. "We're fools to let that fiend have her. Is her beauty the only attraction he is seeking?"

Meg laughed shrilly.

"That's the last," she cried. "Don't ye know she's an heiress to millions? Don't ye see Liscomb will git them millions?"

"But he claims to be rich."

"Rich! He ain't got a sou markee. I tell ye he's a slick fraud, that Liscomb. He's fooled you chaps clean an' good."

The faces of Danton and O'Shane hardened.

"He's fooled us fer the last time," declared the former. "The Big Six is done with him. Now, this gal is goin' back to her father, on condition——"

"That we git the million."

"Sure!"

"But if we don't?"

O'Shane dropped a curse.

"Confound the women!" he said. "If it was a man we'd slit his gizzard. But she'll give us trouble, I tell ye."

"Now, look here," cried Meg. "You dry up about the women. They kin give the men points anytime. I'll look after this gal."

"Good!" cried Danton. "You're the one to do it, Meg. But Mike wanted me to lay matters afore ye jest as they are."

"I see!"

"An' he thinks we'd better git the gal back to New York as quickly as possible. Kin you do it?"

"Well, you bet!" agreed Meg, with alacrity. "An' it's glad I'll be to git thar. I ain't no use fer this kentry no-how. Give me the pavements of old New York. That's my native heath."

"You'll know whar to stow her away all safe there?"

"You kin bet!"

"Then you'll take her there——"

"Ter-morrer!"

## CHAPTER X.

### OLD KING BRADY MEETS DISASTER.

Old King Brady's heart was touched by the spectacle.

He was half inclined to throw himself into the den and effect her rescue then and there.



"All right! We'll git along back an' report to Mike an' ther others. Now, if you want to see us before you git away from here, we'll be at Room 14, Oceanic Hotel, Causeway Street, Boston. See?"

"Yas," agreed the hag.

Old King Brady swiftly made a note of this. He would be there himself.

Gladys Baron was hustled back into the inner room by Meg Pierce. Then she put a brown jug and a loaf of bread on the table and all fell to discussing some vile-looking liquor.

The old detective was elated.

He had gained great revelations.

It looked as if he had the game now wholly in his hands. He watched the trio a few moments.

Then an idea came to him.

Gladys was in the rear room. Would it be possible for him to effect her rescue unknown to the three wretches while they were engaged in drinking?

He determined to try it.

He crept silently around to the rear of the hut. All was dark there. But he flashed his dark lantern against the wall of the hut.

He saw a shuttered window.

This he believed was the window to the room in which Gladys Baron was confined.

He applied his ear to the window and listened. He thought once that he heard a slight movement and a sigh.

Old King Brady applied himself to the opening of the shutters.

This was no easy task.

It was difficult to work silently.

And this was necessary.

But presently one of the shutters yielded and swung slowly back. There was a dim light in the room beyond.

Through the dingy pane the detective saw a ragged couch. Half starting from it with eager upturned face was Gladys Baron.

The detective was just about to make a signal to her to preserve silence when an unexpected thing happened.

Something struck him a terrific blow on the back of the head and he knew no more.

Down he sank in an unconscious heap. Three dark forms bent over him.

"Did ye do him, Sharkey?"

"You bet I did, Jake!"

"Who is he?" squeaked a woman's voice.

"Bring the lantern."

Then the rays fell athwart the old detective's face. Wolfish cries burst from the trio.

"The devil!" gasped Danton.

"Old King Brady!" said O'Shane, more correctly.

"What did I tell ye?" squawked Meg Pierce. "You can't tell when to expect them Bradys. Smart pair you are to let him track ye here!"

The two ruffians trembled with fear. They cast apprehensive glances about.

"Whar ye find one, the other generally ain't far off," whispered O'Shane. "We've got to play a slick game."

"We've got to git out of this place, an' right off!" declared Danton.

"What are ye goin' to do with him?" queried old Meg, touching Old King Brady with her foot.

Danton dropped an oath.

"I'll tell ye one thing," he said rigidly. "Thar'll be no more Old King Brady after to-night. Dead men are least to be feared."

"P'raps he's already dead!"

"Not a bit of it. He's got nine lives. But fire will do him up. We'll git out of this hut now. We'll tie him inside to the floor an' set the place on fire."

Old Meg rubbed her hands.

"Will it be safe?" asked O'Shane.

"Safe?" echoed Danton. "Nuthin' could be safer. Afore anybody could git here thar wouldn't be a cinder left of this old rookery. An' there'd be no more Old King Brady, you bet!"

This plan was agreed upon by the murderous trio.

Old King Brady's lifeless body was lifted and carried into the hut. Then Old Meg brought Gladys out of the place.

The young girl was in too much of a stupor to realize what was going on. The old woman easily led her out of the marsh.

She had reached the beach with her fair charge when hurried footsteps sounded behind her.

Danton and O'Shane, breathless, came dashing out of the marsh grass. Far behind there had suddenly risen from the blackness a great glow of light. It shot up into the sky like a mighty torch.

"Quick!" hissed Danton. "This locality will be a hell fer us in five minutes more. We've got to travel!"

Into the gloom the party dashed. Already the flames had been seen at the Point of Pines and people were flocking up the shore to learn the meaning of it all.

But by the time they had succeeded in reaching the hut nothing but a smouldering heap of ashes was left.

## CHAPTER XI.

### YOUNG KING BRADY FACES THE FOE.

But what of Young King Brady? ?

We left the young detective awaiting signal or word from Old King Brady in the lower part of the North Street tenement.

Young King Brady waited a long while. Naturally he grew impatient.

He finally decided upon a plan of action for himself. He could see no good reason for remaining idle.

So he crept out again into the area or courtyard.

He reached up and grasped the lower round of the fire-escape ladder.

In another moment he was clambering upward. Slowly and cautiously he ascended.



Soon he had reached the level of a window which looked into the chamber occupied by the Big Six.

And thus it happened that while Old King Brady was playing eavesdropper in the adjoining room the younger detective was viewing the scene in the tenement chamber from the fire-escape.

Young King Brady heard all, as well as the older detective. He was equally impressed with the revelation gained.

There was no way for him to communicate with Old King Brady. He could only guess the whereabouts of the old detective.

He saw Danton and O'Shane leave the room, but he had no idea where they were going. So the young detective remained where he was on the fire-escape.

While Old King Brady was tracking Danton and O'Shane, he was still engaged in shadowing the four villains left.

Until near daybreak the four crooks remained in the tenement chamber.

Then they muffled their faces with their coat collars and went out on the street.

Young King Brady followed them.

All the forenoon they walked the streets, looking for any kind of a crooked job they could find.

Once Young King Brady saw Smith and Bendon pick a man's pocket in a crowd near the Public Garden.

The young detective was forced to wink at this, though he would have been glad to have been the means of returning the man's property.

The young detective had guessed the truth that Old King Brady was shadowing Danton and O'Shane on their visit to Meg Pierce.

So he was content to simply keep the quartet in view and await developments.

It was late in the afternoon that they turned down Portland Street and soon came into Causeway Street.

Along this they proceeded until they finally paused before the dingy entrance of a building over the door of which was the sign "Oceanic Hotel."

Here was another rendezvous of the Big Six.

They entered the place.

Young King Brady studied the building.

The lower floor was a dirty looking bar-room. The upper stories were given up to dingy rooms for transient lodgers of the crooked class.

An honest man would hardly have been safe in the place.

But the young detective knew how important it was that he should enter. So he did not hesitate.

He walked along slowly. Suddenly, at an unobserved moment, he glided into the hallway.

Fortunately there was nobody in the place. He was not seen.

He could hear men at the bar drinking and swearing. He peered through a crack in the door, however, and saw that the quartet of villains had not entered the barroom.

Stairs covered with ragged oilcloth were before him.

He proceeded to ascend them. At the first landing he halted.

He heard the murmur of voices. Half way down the corridor he saw the open door of a chamber.

The young detective glided silently to this. He peered into the chamber.

It was empty.

The gang were in the next room and the door was closed. Young King Brady swiftly studied the situation.

Then he acted.

He glided through the open door. The room in which he now found himself was furnished with a large table and a number of chairs.

It had all the appearance of a private smoking or reading room. Files of papers were on the table.

In one corner was a tall screen made of wall paper stretched on a wooden frame. A few pictures adorned the wall. They were all of a sporting character.

Young King Brady noted all this.

Then he placed his ear to the partition.

He could hear faintly the conversation in the next room. McCue was saying:

"It's about time for Sharkey and Jake to be here. I hope they made out all right with Meg."

Just then an electric bell in the room rang sharply. McCue went to a tube in the wall which evidently connected with the bar-room below.

"Hello, Bill!"

"Is that you, Mike?"

"Yes."

"There's a dispatch here for you."

"Where from?"

"New York."

"Send the boy up."

Of course Young King Brady only heard the replies made by McCue. But this was enough for him to guess the rest.

Then footsteps sounded on the stairs. McCue and the others came out into the passageway. For a moment Young King Brady was in deadly peril.

He looked about him and saw the screen.

Quick as a flash he dodged behind it.

He was not a moment too soon.

McCue met the messenger boy and took the message. Then, to Young King Brady's surprise and partial gratification, he entered the very room the detective was in.

The others followed.

"Shut the door," commanded McCue. Then he opened the message.

He read it first himself, and the expression of his features was a study. Something like a curse escaped his lips.

"Thunder!" he ejaculated. "We're up agin it hard, boys!"

"What's the matter?" asked Spero.

"I'll read it," replied McCue. "It's from Liscomb, and he says that Baron is reported dead—lost on the steamer Puritan, of the Fall River Line, while on his way to Boston."

"Dead!" gasped the villains.



"An' our chance fer the million is up!" groaned McCue.

For a time the villains were too much overcome to speak. Young King Brady listened intently.

"Curse the luck!" said Spero. "That spiles ther hull game. Of course we won't get no reward fer the gal now. But we kin yet stick to Liscomb!"

McCue turned upon the Italian fiercely.

"Who says so?" he demanded hotly. "I say no! We've done with Liscomb!"

"That's all right, Mike," said Val Smith, coolly; "Spero is only looking for the best end of it. Ain't thet so, Dago?"

"Aye, that is it," replied the Italian.

"Well, but you know that the best end of it we hev got already," declared McCue. "Mebbe the executors of Baron's estate will pay ther million yet. At any rate, Liscomb won't; but he'll fix it so we'll git into Sing Sing afore two months."

The others chorused approval.

Then a discussion followed as to what it was best to do under the circumstances.

"I reckon it was all a game of Liscomb's, anyway," declared Smith. "He wanted Baron put out of ther way."

"In course it was," cried McCue. "An' he's knocked us out of a million."

"I'll tell ye who'll get the million," said Spero quietly.

"Eh?" ejaculated McCue.

"The two Bradys."

A hiss followed.

"Death to 'em!" gritted McCue. "I wish we had 'em here at this moment."

But before more could be said or done footsteps sounded in the corridor.

Then the door burst open.

Two men rushed in.

They were Danton and O'Shane.

A chorus of welcoming cries followed. Then McCue cried out:

"Did ye see Meg?"

"Yes," replied Danton.

"And is she wid us?"

"Sure! She is now on the way to New York wid the gal. But I've got better news, pals."

"What?" chorused the gang.

"Old King Brady is dead!"

For a moment a dead silence ensued. Young King Brady behind the screen turned sick and faint.

He gasped with horror and anguish.

It was a terrible shock, for he had no doubt the villains spoke the truth.

To think of the old detective as dead, as forever gone, was a dreadful thing. It made him sick and faint.

"My God!" he groaned, mentally, "what an awful thing. Oh, I pray it is not true."

But Danton and O'Shane now recited their tale. The young detective listened with awful horror.

As they told of the firing of the hut his whole being was fired. He longed to hurl himself upon them and avenge the death of Old King Brady.

The chuckling of McCue and the manifestations of delight by the gang were a hard thing to listen to.

"With the bad news has come good news," cried McCue. "In course Mr. Baron's death may balk us of ther million, but we've got the gal an' we got rid of one of our worst enemies. The coast is clear now, I reckon."

"But thar's one Brady left," said Spero.

"Young King Brady!"

"We'll lay for him!"

"He'll be out of it without the old detective. He is easy game!"

Young King Brady felt his blood tingle. In the excitement of the moment he leaned a little too hard against the screen.

It began to fall.

Young King Brady grasped at it, but the movement was seen by the villains. In a moment a chorus of cries went up.

"Treachery!"

"Somebody is behind that screen."

"Pull him out!"

"Kill him!"

McCue leaped forward and dashed the screen away. But before he did this Young King Brady had foreseen the crisis.

He knew that his life hung in the balance.

All depended upon quick work, and the odds were against him. He knew that the villains would take his life if they could.

Like a flash he sprang out and across the room.

He was unarmed.

His purpose was to, if possible, reach the door.

He grasped a chair and rushed upon his foes.

McCue had dashed in front of him with a pistol in his hand. He had it half raised when Young King Brady whirled the chair aloft. Down it came on the villain's head.

McCue was hurled to the floor. Young King Brady, with chair uplifted, stood back to the wall defying his foes.

In that moment he had no expectation of coming out of the affair alive. But he would sell his life as dearly as possible.

The other ruffians for an instant after the fall of their chief stood inactive. They had armed themselves with the nearest available weapons.

One had a pistol, another a poker, and a third a club.

But a startling turning of tables was at hand. Footsteps were heard in the corridor without.

While Young King Brady faced his foes the door swung open.

"Hold!" cried a trumpet voice.

Old King Brady stood on the threshold with a brace of revolvers.

Old King Brady it was beyond a doubt; the indomitable old detective whom Danton and O'Shane had left to burn up with the shanty on the marsh.

It was no spirit that stood before the Big Six.

The strong, stern features of the great detective beneath



the broad-brimmed white hat palled upon the terrified villains.

Instinctively they fell back, not from fear of the pistols so much as in terror of the man whose life seemed undoubtedly charmed.

Back from the dead!

It seemed as if Old King Brady's life must have been spared by a veritable miracle.

But in reality it was all owing to a simple fact. When first struck on the head by O'Shane the detective had been rendered senseless.

But in bringing him into the hut the two villains had failed to notice that Old King Brady had revived.

The old detective, however, kept this to himself. He knew that resistance in his weakened state would be useless.

So he feigned insensibility. He heard all the plans made by the villains.

When they fired the hut and decamped, however, Old King Brady took action.

He was bound hand and foot, but as the flames crept toward him along the floor of the hut he burned the cords which bound him in the tongues of fire, and thus freed himself.

It did not take him long to get out of the hut.

He had lost track of Meg Pierce and her fair charge.

But he regained the trail of O'Shane and Danton, and followed them to the very moment of their entrance to the Oceanic House.

He had appeared on the scene also just in the nick of time. His loud, commanding voice rang out:

"Hold!"

In spite of themselves, the six villains were held by that command. Then Old King Brady cried:

"Surrender peaceably, every one of you, on peril of your lives. This house is surrounded by officers and there is no possible chance for any of you to escape."

As he spoke blue-coated police appeared in the door. It looked very much as if the jig was up.

## CHAPTER XII.

### ON A NEW LEAD.

When Old King Brady had tracked Danton and O'Shane to the Oceanic House and realized that all the gang were here corraled, he had decided to at once take measures to make sure of them.

So he proceeded to the nearest police signal box. As soon as an officer came along he got him to telephone to headquarters for a posse.

And these arrived just in good season, as we have seen.

The majority of the gang were ready to agree that the game was up and they would yield.

But McCue was desperate.

He saw all his best-laid plans melting into thin air. It angered him beyond endurance.

He looked about him like a hunted animal.

Danton stood near.

Danton was a well educated man and superior to the others in craft. McCue selected him.

"Jake, make for the window and the fire-escape," he whispered. "Stick by me!"

Then McCue hurled his club at Young King Brady and made a dash for the window at the same moment.

In an instant the police were in the room. In the melee which followed heads were broken and blood flowed.

But McCue and Danton escaped.

They reached the fire-escape and slid into the alley below. No further trace of them could be found.

Spero, Smith, O'Shane and Bendon, however, were manacled and carried away as prisoners.

Boston was scoured for some trace of Danton and McCue.

For several days the detectives searched.

But in vain.

Neither could anything be learned of the whereabouts of Meg Pierce and her fair charge, Gladys Baron. They had disappeared as effectually as if the earth had swallowed them up.

Mr. Baron, in his enforced retirement at the Adams House, chafed constantly.

But Old King Brady spoke reassuring words to him.

"There is one thing we may congratulate ourselves upon," he said; "I don't think Gladys will get into the clutches of Liscomb again. McCue and Meg Pierce will look out for that."

"But—what do you propose to do now?" asked Mr. Baron.

"Go back to New York."

"To New York?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"A very good reason. The scene of action is no longer in Boston. The woman Meg went to New York with Gladys. The two villains, McCue and Danton, have a score to settle with Liscomb."

"Ah, I see."

"Many interesting things are due to happen in Gotham right away. The horizon was never clearer. All will be sure to come out right."

"Heaven bless you for such words of cheer," declared the millionaire warmly. "I trust you are a true prophet."

"The near future will decide."

"But, shall I be obliged to stay here?" asked Mr. Baron.

"Not if you can safely remain incognito in New York. It is necessary to blind Liscomb for a brief while yet, so that he may hang himself with his own rope."

"Ah, I see!"

So it happened that the next day the two Bradys, with Mr. Baron in close disguise, took a train for New York.

The millionaire retired to a room at the Murray Hill Hotel to await the result of the detectives' work. He kept



strictly to his room, so that there was little danger of his identity being revealed.

While the two Bradys searched the city for a trace of McCue or Meg Pierce.

It was a baffling search.

For a time the detectives made no headway, until an idea came to Young King Brady.

He ventured to assert it to the older detective.

"I think," said Young King Brady, "that it would pay us better to get a lead on this man Liscomb."

"Eh?" exclaimed Old King Brady. "What is your idea in that, boy?"

"Just this: We know that McCue has a deadly hatred for Liscomb and has sworn to do him up."

"There's the point. By shadowing Liscomb we may strike McCue's trail."

Old King Brady nodded.

"I give you credit for that, Harry," he said. "It did not occur to me."

"What do you think of the suggestion?"

"Capital! We will follow it."

So the two detectives began to haunt the Grand Hotel and got track of Liscomb.

The arch-schemer was not in the most comfortable frame of mind possible.

The truth was he was completely mystified by the conduct of McCue and Danton.

The two villains had not been near him, nor had they made any report as to the condition or whereabouts of Gladys Baron.

The hypnotist had lost his influence over the young girl through long absence from her proximity. He could not feel the mysterious affinity which had hitherto been the secret of his baneful power.

He had begun in fact to suspect treachery. He knew that four of the Big Six were in prison.

At heart he was sick of the whole crew and anxious to be rid of them.

He believed that Black Jennie had faithfully performed her contract and done away with Mr. Baron.

This left the coast clear for many schemes which he had long fostered.

It was his plan to get Gladys into his clutches by means of his hypnotic influence. Then he would be sure of the millions of Loyd Baron, for he would force her to marry him.

But, in the event that he was not able to effect the marriage, he had another plan to fall back on.

By means of divers forged records and certificates, he was prepared to show that he was a nephew, and hence nearest of kin to Loyd Baron, other than Gladys.

But Gladys ere this would be long out of the way. For the mercenary schemer allowed no such trivial obstacle as human life to stand in his way.

Thus matters stood. The two King Bradys understood it.

They had thoroughly sized up Liscomb. He deserved a perpetual home behind prison bars, but the time had not yet come to put him there.

The detectives also were right in assuming that McCue would not leave New York until he had settled the fate of Liscomb forever. The hatred which the ringleader of the Big Six had for Liscomb was most deadly.

For a number of days the detectives shadowed Liscomb.

Wherever he went they were close at his heels. Nothing of moment developed, and Old King Brady was beginning to consider a change of plan, when one day matters suddenly came to a head.

Liscomb was in the habit of frequenting a resort known as Dooley's, in the very heart of the Tenderloin.

At Dooley's many of the fast and fancy set of New York met. These were people of wealth and easy morals.

Wine flowed and fancy edibles were discussed by the *creme de la creme* of that set.

Liscomb had a penchant for this sort of people. He spent much of his time at Dooley's.

It so happened on this particular evening Liscomb strolled into the place.

An orchestra was playing and men and women were sitting at tables drinking wine and beer. The place was crowded.

Liscomb seated himself at a table.

He ordered a glass of Chartreuse.

This was his favorite wine.

While he sipped it leisurely he experienced a sudden start.

A woman, accompanied by a bent-up, wheezy old man, who wore an immense diamond in his shirt front and looked altogether too eminently respectable for that sort of company, entered the place.

She was flashily dressed and wore an enormous black hat.

But her face could not be plainly seen, for a veil was drawn closely over it.

As she passed the tables men stared at her curiously and women insolently. The old man coughed and wheezed incessantly.

It was plain that this veiled representative of the demi-monde had caught a victim, and the victim was easily one of the millionaire set.

But to one person in the music hall that slender woman was familiar.

This was Liscomb.

He stared at her with wide-open mouth. He half hoped that she would not see him.

He knew that he owed her five thousand dollars, and just now he had not the money to give her.

For the woman was Black Jennie.

But Liscomb hoped in vain.

She had seen him.

In fact, she was now coming directly toward him. She lifted her veil and gave him a smile.

Liscomb rose with feigned delight to welcome her.

She took his hand. Then she said:

"We meet once more!"

"Yes," replied Liscomb, falsely; "and I feared I should not see you again. Where have you been?"



"Busy!" and Black Jennie, with a grimace, nodded toward the coughing old man. "You know!"

"I see," said Liscomb, with a grin. "Rocks to burn, I suppose?"

"Well, you've hit it. But didn't I do that job up grand?"

"It couldn't have been done better," declared Liscomb. "You are par excellence. I am proud to know you."

Then he felt of his pocket.

"But I haven't the five thousand with me," he said carelessly. "Come to my room at the Grand any time."

"That is all right," replied Black Jennie lightly. "But allow me to introduce you to my dear, good friend, Mr. Felix Bond. My dear Mr. Bond, this is my good brother, Mr. Liscomb."

The old man turned one bleared eye upon Liscomb, essayed a smile, but lost it in a cough, and stammered:

"Brother, eh? Didn't know you had a brother. Glad to meet you—dem it—yes—aw——"

Then followed a coughing spell.

"Jupiter!" exclaimed Liscomb, giving Jennie a covert glance. "You'll be laying him away in Greenwood before long if you don't cure that cough."

Black Jennie laughed merrily.

Then she leaned over the old man, patting his shoulder.

"Now, dear Posy," she said in cooing tones, "my brother and I want to talk over our childhood days. So we'll take a promenade around the hall. You can sit here until I come back."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE TRAGEDY.

The Honorable Mr. Bond did not demur.

It was the little tyrannies of women that delighted men of his stamp. So he only nodded and fell to sipping a slender glass of absinthe.

It is ever a noteworthy fact that old rascals like Mr. Bond are uncommonly addicted to absinthe.

Black Jennie the shoplifter now took Liscomb's arm and they walked into the dance hall.

"So you put old Baron out in the first round?" asked Liscomb slangily.

"You know that."

"It was cleverly done. Was there no risk?"

"The easiest job of my life, though I've kept pretty close ever since. But, by the way, where is the girl?"

A curse dropped from Liscomb's lips.

"That is more than I know," he gritted. "McCue has dropped out of sight, and so has Meg Pierce."

"But don't they send any word?"

"Not a whimper! Confound that McCue! I believe he is treacherous."

"And you don't know where they are?"

"No!"

"But the girl, I thought you had her under a hypnotic spell. Can't you draw her away from them?"

"The spell is gone. I have not been able to renew it. There is the whole thing which gives me an idea!"

"What?"

"You can help me!"

"You trust me then?"

"Why should I not? You have not failed me yet!"

"Well, what is the job?"

"You can locate McCue or the Pierce woman better than I can. Do it for me and I will pay you well!"

"It's a bargain!"

Liscomb was delighted.

"Jennie," he said impetuously. "You're an honor to your trade. I never did business with so square a crook."

"Honor among thieves!" she laughed.

"Well said, and you are its personification. You'll be well paid when I get old Baron's millions."

"You expect to do that!"

"I do!"

"Well, I wish you luck. Now I'll go back to my dear Mr. Bond. As soon as I hear from McCue I'll let you know. Ah!"

The latter exclamation was caused by an incident.

A rough looking man had entered the dance hall.

He swept the place with his gaze and singled out Liscomb.

He came up to him readily and asked:

"Are you Mr. Liscomb?"

"That is my name!"

"Hyars suthin' fer you!"

A yellow envelope was thrust into Liscomb's hand. The villain glanced at the irregular chirography. When he looked up the man was gone.

Thus the envelope was addressed:

"Mister B. Liscum!

"New Yorke."

"Humph!" ejaculated the schemer glancing at Black Jennie. "What is this?"

She smiled archly.

"Perhaps it's from McCue," she hazarded.

"You are a good guesser!" he cried. "I knew his facial chirography. But let us see what he has to say!"

Slowly Liscomb opened the letter. The shop-lifter affected to turn her head. But Liscomb who noticed this said:

"Pshaw! I trust you, Jennie. Read it also and let us see what he says!"

So she glanced also at the soiled sheet.

On it in painfully irregular lines was written the following:

"Dear Liscum:

"I haint had any time too rite yo afour. Ther doggo detectives hev giv us a hard pull. Butt we hev ther girl safe and yoo kan get her offen our hans too wunce. Cu



to-night when yoo git this too Weehawken. A board shantie under ther hill, one half mile down ther rale rode trak. Bee heer by twelv. Yoors trulee,  
"McCUE."

Liscomb laughed at the rude epistle as did Black Jennie.

Then the arch schemer placed the letter in an inner pocket and said:

"I'll be there before twelve o'clock. Now I'm off for the Weehawken Ferry. Come to see me at the Grand, Jennie. Good-night."

"Good-night!"

Liscomb lifted his hat and was gone.

The shoplifter went back to the coughing old man. She spoke in an undertone:

"I've got the lay dead to rights. There's work for us to-night."

"Eh?" whispered the pseudo millionaire. "He got a message?"

"Yes!"

"Who from?"

"McCue!"

"Humph!" said Old King Brady, for no doubt the reader has before this guessed his identity. "That does mean work for us!"

Together the two detectives left the place.

They went into a dark alley and in a very short space of time removed their disguises.

When they came out onto the street again they were the two Brady detectives.

Sharp work was before them.

They knew this well.

Old King Brady looked at his watch.

It was just eleven o'clock.

There was no time to lose in getting to the Weehawken Ferry. They at once started for it.

In due course they boarded the ferry-boat and were on their way across the North river.

There had been no attempt to follow or shadow Liscomb.

This was not necessary.

The villain would be sure to go to the place of appointment and the detectives knew where to find him.

In Weehawken the two detectives left the boat and struck out down the railroad track.

No person was ahead of or behind them as far as they could see.

The message sent by McCue had said that the cabin was half a mile down the track. In this direction the two detectives were proceeding.

When they had covered the required half mile they found themselves under the high battlements of a cliff.

"This must be the locality," whispered Old King Brady. "But I see no sign of a shanty."

"But I do," declared Young King Brady.

"Where?"

"A light—up yonder."

A faint star of light was seen far up the face of the cliff.

The detectives then searched for some moments and found a foot-path.

Up this they crept cautiously.

Suddenly when half way up the path Old King Brady clutched the younger detective's arm.

"Wait!" he whispered.

From a point on the cliff side just beyond them there came strange sounds. These seemed to be hurrying footsteps and the rattle of gravel and dislodged earth.

"What is it?" whispered Young King Brady.

"They must have taken warning and be making their escape!"

"You fancy that?"

"We will see!"

With this Old King Brady crept up the path swiftly. In a few moments the rude shanty on the cliff side was dimly visible in the night.

No light shone from its windows.

The two detectives paused.

What did it mean?

Was the place deserted?

Had the villains fled?

There was some risk in openly approaching the place. In that dark interior a murderous foe might be lurking.

A better death trap could not be devised. For some while the detectives were in doubt. Then Old King Brady shifted his position more in front of the building.

He gave a start.

The shanty door was wide open.

To all appearances the place was empty. Old King Brady with sudden decision boldly stepped out and approached it.

He reached the door with Young King Brady at his elbow.

It was too dark to see anything of the interior of the shanty.

But Old King Brady drew the slide of his dark lantern and flashed its rays into the place.

Then both gave a thrilled start.

On the splintered floor of the shanty lay the body of a man face down. A great pool of blood surrounded him.

Into the place the two detectives now unhesitatingly stepped.

There were no other occupants.

Old King Brady knelt and turned the body over. The lantern's glare fell athwart his pallid face.

A long jagged gash lay across the jugular vein. The features were tranquil and familiar to the detectives.

It was Bertrand Liscomb.

He was dead!

With a sickening sense of horror the two detectives gazed at the dead hypnotist. They understood all.

McCue had executed his vendetta.

The message received by Liscomb at the music hall had been a clever decoy. The villain and arch schemer had expiated his crimes.

So far as he was now concerned the detectives' case was done. They had no further charge against him.

"Whew!" exclaimed Old King Brady rising to his feet.



"That fellow little dreamed that he was going into a trap."

"That McCue is a fiend!"

"But no greater than his victim."

"True."

"We've done with him!"

"Yes!"

"Our business now is with McCue and the woman Meg Pierce."

"And their game——"

"Is ransom!"

"Just so!"

"But they'll never get it. We must get the girl out of their clutches at once."

The removal of Liscomb would have seemed to make the case lighter and easier of solution.

But the detectives were destined to find that McCue and Meg Pierce as well as Jake Danton were a tough proposition. They had not the cunning and craft of Liscomb, but they were dangerous all the same.

However, the two Bradys were narrowing the chase every day. Could they but succeed in getting a clutch on McCue and Danton the notorious Big Six would be a thing of the past.

They would have accomplished the greatest detective coup of the past decade.

Both knew this well.

They searched the palisades and along the river shore. But no trace of the murderers could be found.

Then they went back to New York.

The murder was reported and the authorities took charge of the body. A tremendous sensation was created.

Of course detectives and reporters made all effort to solve the mystery of Liscomb's murder.

But only two men in New York outside of the perpetrators knew the truth. These were the two Bradys.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### IN CHICAGO.

Neither Old King Brady nor Harry Brady for a moment fancied that Gladys had been in the Weehawken shanty at the time of the murder.

It was their opinion that the shanty had merely been used as a place of decoy for the purpose of murdering Liscomb.

It was probable that McCue and Meg Pierce had decamped for some distant point.

As there was now no longer need of Mr. Baron's remaining incognito he returned to his home.

Of course his return surprised many who had believed him dead.

But the millionaire did not think it necessary to vouchsafe any explanation. Nor did he.

The two Bradys were now wholly at sea. The case had not developed at all as Old King Brady had expected.

The murder of Liscomb was an unexpected feature.

But the two detectives did not for a moment relax their efforts despite this adverse tide.

Thus matters were, when the cupidity of human nature conspired to give them once more a clew.

McCue and his pals Danton and Meg Pierce had Gladys in their keeping wherever they were.

With the discovery by them that Mr. Baron was not dead after all, the desire to recover the million dollars offered for the return of Gladys Baron was strong.

It tempted them so far that a letter one day reached the millionaire.

Thus it read:

"Mister Barren.

"Dear Sir—I can find yoor girl fer yoo an' will turn her over to yoo all safe an' well fer the reward yoo offer of a million. But I'm a crook an' I can't risk showing myself to yoo. If yoo will purtect me and agree not ter turn me over ter the cops I'll do bisness with yoo an' yoo will git yoor girl all safe. Write me to Atlantic House Chicago.

"Yours truly,

MIKE McCUE."

Mr. Baron read this letter and for a moment the desire was strong upon him to comply with the demand and pay the reward to McCue for the surety of Gladys' restoration.

But on second thought fearing fraud, he sought Old King Brady.

It was well that he did.

The old detective grasped the clew with avidity.

"Now we have it," he cried. "This letter is postmarked Chicago. Harry and I will get Gladys out of their clutches now, do not fear."

A night train took the two detectives out of New York.

The run to Chicago was quickly made.

In close disguise they alighted at the Chicago depot. They went at once to the Atlantic House.

Here they registered under assumed names and then sat down in the hotel lobby to wait.

They knew that McCue would be certain to come there. It would then be their trick to nab him.

All that first day they waited in vain. Then on the morning of the second day McCue appeared.

Mr. Baron had been instructed to write McCue a temporizing letter.

This had arrived and was waiting in the hotel post office box. McCue called for and received the letter.

Two pairs of eyes were on him while he read it.

"Shall we take him now?" asked Young King Brady.

But the old detective shook his head.

"Not yet; we must shadow him until we find out where the girl is!"

"Of course!"

McCue read Mr. Baron's letter. It could be seen that he was elated at the prospect of bringing the millionaire to terms.

He was dressed in a flashy suit of checked material and looked a thorough tough and sport.



He went into the reading room and sitting down at a desk wrote to Mr. Baron an answer.

What the letter contained the detectives did not know nor did they specially care.

They watched the villain closely.

After a while he got up and dropped the epistle in a letter box. Then he left the hotel.

He walked down Van Buren street for some distance and turned finally into Randolph street.

The detectives were close behind him, one on one side of the street and one on the other.

Suddenly McCue vanished.

The detectives hurriedly reached the spot where he had been.

For a moment they were stumped.

Then Old King Brady saw steps leading down into a basement. Over the door was a sign:

### BEER AND BILLIARDS.

There was no doubt that McCue had gone down into this place. But it was necessary to make sure.

There seemed no other way but to descend into the place.

There was some risk to this.

The villain if there might gain the impression that they were pursuing him. In that case, much would be lost.

But it was necessary to decide quickly and Old King Brady did so.

"Down we go!" he said.

When the two detectives entered the place they were quarreling fiercely.

"I tell you there's no such rule in the game," Young King Brady shouted. "You must take the cushion first on that kind of a shot."

"Young man, don't you suppose I know billiards?" stormed Old King Brady. He was cleverly disguised as a type of merchant.

"No," retorted Young King Brady, "not if you hold to that point."

"Don't be so fresh! I'll play you for a hundred or a thousand a side any time."

"I'm your man."

"It's a go!"

Both pulled off their coats.

An attendant showed them to a table.

At the next table two men were just beginning to play. A glance told the detectives they were on the right scent.

The two men were McCue and Danton.

Truly the Bradys seemed playing in big luck.

They were right onto their birds again after having lost the trail in New York. Nothing could have worked better.

Young King Brady began making fancy shots.

The young detective was really a fine billiard player.

Old King Brady was also a good player. As they played they wrangled.

This drew the attention of McCue and Danton. They even suspended their own game to watch the others.

"I tell you that ball is frozen. You can't play that shot!" shouted Young King Brady.

"The cue ball is clear. I can see daylight between them," declared Old King Brady.

"No, you can't!"

"I tell you I can."

"I protest the shot!"

"Protest and be hanged! I'll leave it out."

"To fair judges?"

"Yes."

The detectives looked around. Old King Brady glanced at McCue and Danton.

"Here are two gentlemen," he cried. "We'll leave it with them, if they will kindly umpire for us!"

"Begging your pardon," said Young King Brady politely, "would you do us that kind favor?"

McCue exchanged glances with Danton. Both smiled broadly.

"In course I will," agreed McCue. "What's ther question anyway?"

"Whether the cue ball is frozen to the other or not?" asked Old King Brady.

McCue looked at the balls critically.

"I should say it was clean froze," he declared. "What do yew say, Jake?"

Danton nodded.

"Clean froze!" he agreed.

"There!" cried Young King Brady. "What do you say to that? It's my point!"

"All right," said Old King Brady, with affected discomfiture. "I've nothing more to say. Go ahead and play."

The two detectives now made some brilliant shots.

Suddenly Young King Brady pulled a roll of bills from his pocket.

"Tell you what I'll do, McIntire," he cried. "To make it interesting I'll bet you five to four that I can beat you in the next two runs!"

"I'll take you!" cried Old King Brady. "Put up your money. Ah, perhaps this gentleman will be so kind as to hold the stakes."

This flattered McCue.

"In course I will," he replied. "Allus glad to accomodate. Five to four on, eh?"

"Yes!"

"I'm afraid you're up against it, my friend. I'll lay you five even you get beat."

Old King Brady gave McCue a sweeping glance.

"Done and done!" he cried. "Here's your money. Let your friend hold the money."

Danton took the stakes.

Then the detectives chalked their cues and begun. Young King Brady easily won the match.

This again pleased McCue.

He had won his bet.

He did not hesitate to pocket the money.

"I knowed ther little one 'ud be too many for ye," he declared jubilantly. "I'd like to lay ye even all day on that."

"I've had enough," said Old King Brady. "My name's



McIntire. I travel for a Boston firm. Have I the pleasure?"

"My name is McCue," replied the villain. "An' this 'ere is my friend, Jake Danton. We travel on ther square."

"I'm a Mason also," replied Old King Brady warmly, "and this is my friend and relative, Jack Smith."

"Glad to meet you, gentlemen," said Young King Brady. "We're a bit new in Chicago. Great metropolis, eh?"

"Wall, we're proud of it," said McCue with all the unction of an old resident. "We think we can give New York a rub."

"So you can. Pretty well acquainted here, eh? Know all the joints?"

McCue slowly winked his eye.

"If I don't," he said slangily.

"Of course you know where gents of leisure can while away a quiet hour at a game of cards?"

"Poker?"

"Sure!"

"Wall," said McCue slowly, "thar's a room back of this place. I'll show ye in there on the square!"

"On the square!" replied the detective.

"Sometimes I play myself."

"You do? Why, then won't you and your friend join us?"

McCue looked at Danton.

"How is it, Jake?" he asked.

"I'm agreeable."

"That settles it," cried McCue. "You shall come with me. I'll show you how to buck the tiger in gay Chicago."

## CHAPTER XV.

### A CLEVER GAME.

McCue led the way to a dark green, baize-covered door near the bar.

Through this they pushed their way.

The scene which met the detectives' gaze was an astonishing one. The place was filled with tables. At a long bar sat a good representative of the gambling art, who seemed to act as croupier in the game of roulette which this novel gambling den had been playing for some while.

At the tables men were playing cards. Poker and California Jack were rife.

In spite of the most earnest efforts of the police in Chicago as well as all other large cities gambling will thrive.

This resort was patronized by some of Chicago's wealthiest men.

Sooner or later it would be sure to be raided by the law.

But for the present the proprietor was protected by a huge political pull.

The detectives entered the place with a swagger and a confident air. McCue winked to Danton.

"We've caught a couple of suckers," he whispered. "Let us bleed them!"

"I'll go ye!"

"Thar won't be much left when we git through."

"Wall, you bet."

A table was selected and the four men seated themselves at it.

McCue produced a pack of cards.

He threw them on the table.

"Cut fer deal?" he asked.

"Lowest card?" asked Young King Brady.

"As ye please."

"Call it so."

"All right."

Young King Brady cut a two-spot.

"Give it to ye," said McCue, showing his irregular teeth in a grin. "Deal me a good hand. Ante all!"

The antes were made and the cards dealt. Old King Brady threw his hand into the ruck. Danton did the same.

Young King Brady and McCue held. The former drew a pair of nines to go with his three fours.

McCue shoved a ten-dollar bill into the pile. Young King Brady raised it five. McCue called.

"Three of a kind and a pair," said the young detective throwing down his cards. McCue turned his cards face up.

"Not good," he declared coolly. "Here are four tens."

McCue raked in the money.

The next hand was won by Old King Brady with three aces. Then hands began to run high.

But somehow the luck seemed to run with McCue.

He won constantly.

Very soon the detectives found that they were one hundred dollars behind. But Old King Brady did not wince.

He was only paying what he considered a fair price for valuable results. These results were close at hand.

Suddenly the old detective threw down his hand.

"Play on!" he said. "I'm going to get a bottle of brandy and some glasses."

McCue, flushed with success, cried:

"Count me in on that! It's my pay."

Old King Brady glided into the barroom. When he came back he had a bottle of brandy with the cork drawn and four glasses.

He filled the glasses.

Lifting one, he said:

"Here's to the health of the winning gentleman," looking at McCue.

"Long life to ye!" cried the crook, draining his glass.

But Old King Brady checked himself just as the glass was at his lips and muttered:

"Oh, I forgot my ginger. I always drink brandy with ginger."

So he ran out into the barroom. When he returned his glass was empty and he wiped his lips. But nobody had seen him drink.

Danton drank his glass.

"I never drink brandy," said Young King Brady. "I have some beer by and by."



Again and again the two crooks drained their glasses. Suddenly McCue bent forward and rested his head and arms on the table.

"Phew! I'm dizzy!" he said.

"So am I," said Danton, tipping his head back in his chair. And the two villains knew no more.

They were not noticed by others in the room.

In fact, the table was in an angle of the wall and out of sight of any but those players whose backs were turned.

They were too deeply engrossed in their game.

It was no uncommon thing for men to drink and sleep at the tables. So they would hardly have been noticed in any event.

Young King Brady and Old King Brady glanced at each other.

"You fixed that brandy clever," said the young detective.

"I don't like such business. But it had to be done."

"Sure."

"Now keep an eye on the rest of the room!"

"All right."

Old King Brady's hand went dexterously through the pockets of the ruffians. In one of them was a package of letters.

McCue's pocket held them.

The letters were in a feminine hand and were signed Meg Pierce. Very deliberately the old detective read them.

And it accorded the detectives a thrilling revelation.

One of the letters had been received that day. It was dated at New York City and was from Meg Pierce.

The woman was not in Chicago after all. This was an important discovery.

Thus the letter read:

"Dear Mike—The girl is in bad shape an' I am skeered, or fear she'll go under afore we kin git that reward. If you don't hit a bargain pooty quick she will cheat us out of everything. Take what ye kin git an' take some chances. Even a hundred thousand ain't to be sneezed at. Git it to meet. I'm stoppin' at Highgates place, J. C. You kin let me by addressin' a letter to Huber's Cigar Store, No. —, Central street, J. C. Hain't seen no detectives yet. But they may cum down on me any minute. Jest as soon as you hit a trade cum on to New York an' write me whar to meet you. Yours truly,  
MEG."

Old King Brady carefully placed this letter in his notebook.

Then he arose.

"We've got to get these fellows out of here," he whispered to Young King Brady. "And we must do it clever." "I see."

"It won't do to bring a squad of officers in here all of a sudden. There'd be some kind of a ruction and we'd lose our men."

"That's right," agreed Young King Brady.

"Now I've got a plan."

"Yes."

"You go out and get a hack. Have it at this side door. I'll fix things with the proprietor."

"All right."

Young King Brady departed.

The old detective now went to the bar. He silently beckoned to the proprietor.

"I'm sorry," he said, "but two friends of mine have been taking a little too much, and they're asleep in the other room there."

The proprietor's face darkened.

"You must get 'em out," he said.

"That's just what I propose to do," replied Old King Brady. "There'll be a carriage at the side door in a few moments. I'll take 'em out careful."

The proprietor's face cleared.

"That's all right," he said. "Don't make any racket or we'll get pulled."

"I'll guarantee that."

"All right."

Old King Brady went back to where McCue and Danton were sleeping. He did not have long to wait.

Young King Brady suddenly appeared.

The young detective made a signal.

"All right."

They carried the unconscious men one after the other out to the carriage. There the order was given to the driver in an undertone to drive to the Clark street police station.

Half an hour later Old King Brady had his birds behind bars. They were arrested under assumed names and held by the courtesy of the Chicago chief of police on the charge of gambling and drunkenness until Old King Brady might secure extradition papers for them.

It was a grand "scoop" for the two Bradys, and now all that was left for them to do to complete the case was to capture Meg Pierce and rescue Gladys Baron.

This, as Old King Brady had planned, would not be a difficult matter.

His plan was a decoy letter.

Accordingly he wrote it in imitation of McCue's chirography, as follows:

"Dear Meg:

"I hev heerd from Barren an' he is goin' to settle with us fer half a million. Will mete you nex' Saturday at Room 14, Oceanic House, West street, New York. Bee there at 8 p. m. Yures trulee,  
MIKE."

This letter was mailed to Meg Pierce at her address in Jersey City.

Then the detectives left Chicago.

They took a train for New York. It was Saturday morning early when they rolled into the Grand Central Depot.

Old King Brady went at once to headquarters. The chief of the secret service was delighted to see him.

"I have been wondering what had become of you," he cried. "How is the Baron case getting on?"

"Very well indeed," replied Old King Brady.

"Ah!" exclaimed the chief; "that is good news. What is the latest development?"

"The final development will occur about 8 o'clock to-night."

The chief started out of his chair.



"What?" he gasped. "Do you mean that? Have you got so far?"

"The Baron case is almost finished."

The chief stared at Old King Brady.

"You are not joking?"

"No, sir."

The chief whistled slowly.

"Well," he said, "I knew that if anybody could work that problem out it would be you Bradys. Do you know what it means? Besides the reputation there is——"

"A half million each," replied Old King Brady imperturbably. "That is all. The young man and I will make good use of the money."

"I don't doubt it."

"I know a few deserving charities I shall remember."

"That is good."

"Now," said Old King Brady. "Now to business."

"What can I do for you?"

"Secure extradition papers for Mike McCue and Jake Danton. They are behind the bars in Chicago. Send two officers after them at once."

"How much time have we?"

"The Chicago police will hold the crooks ten days."

"That is time enough!" cried the chief. "They shall be brought to New York at once."

With this Old King Brady took his leave. Sharp work was before him.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### INTO THE NET.

Old King Brady proceeded to the Astor House. In the rotunda he met Young King Brady.

They dined, and then the young detective consulted his watch.

"It is six-thirty," he said. "We might as well put in an appearance at the Oceanic."

"All right."

They went to a private room in the hotel, which Young King Brady had secured, and made themselves up for the role they had decided to play.

This was that of two crooks.

They made themselves up as much in imitation of McCue and Danton as possible.

Then they left the Astor House.

They strolled down Warren street until they reached West street. Along the thoroughfare of wharves they went.

Soon they came to a dingy looking brick building.

Over the entrance was a red light and a sign which read:

"Hotel Oceanic."

"This is the place," whispered Old King Brady. "I hope Room 14 is unoccupied. If not we shall have to explain it to the woman and get another."

Now the Oceanic was the resort of some types of the roughest 'longshoremen in New York. Among these were not a few real crooks.

Old King Brady knew this well.

He had chosen the right place.

Meg Pierce would expect to meet McCue by appointment in just such a den.

The Oceanic was kept by Mother Montgomery, as she was known to the frequenters of the place.

She was one of the hardest characters in Gotham herself. Yet she was reputed to keep a good lodging house.

The two detectives entered the place.

They passed up dingy stairs.

In a small, square room a number of wharf men were sitting about, engaged in smoking and tobacco chewing.

At a counter set against the wall was a large, strongly built woman.

This was the proprietress of the place, "Marm" or Mother Montgomery. As the two detectives entered she gave them a critical glance.

So cleverly were the two Bradys disguised that they deceived even her.

Old King Brady slouched up to the counter and touched his hat.

"Evenin', marm," he said. "Kin a tired man git a bed here to-night?"

"Air there two of ye?" asked the lodging house keeper.

"Me an' my mate."

"Register."

She pushed a greasy book toward them. Old King Brady took the stumpy pen, and, affecting much labor, wrote in an almost illegible hand:

"Mike McCue, Chicago, Ill."

"Jakob Danton, same."

Mother Montgomery glanced carelessly at the names and said:

"One room or two?"

"Is Room 14 taken?" asked the pseudo Mike McCue. "Yer see, a friend of mine oncet had that room, an' seed was all right."

"All my rooms air all right," said Mother Montgomery testily. "But ye kin have 14 if ye want it."

She took down a key from a rack.

"Ther bellboy is out," she said. "But go up them stairs and ye'll see the numbers on ther door."

Old King Brady took the key.

The two detectives started toward the stairway. They were halted by an imperative word from the hotel proprietress.

"Hold on!"

The detectives turned.

She faced them, holding out her hand.

"Seventy-five fer two over night. Payment in advance!"

"Sure!" cried Old King Brady, diving into his pocket. "I wouldn't cheat ye for the world. Heyar ye go!"

He tossed a dollar note into her hand. She flipped back a quarter.

Then Old King Brady leaned forward and whispered



"I reckon ye know Meg Pierce?"  
 Mother Montgomery gave a start.  
 She gazed keenly at her interlocutor.  
 "What of it?" she asked.  
 There was suspicion in her voice.  
 "That's all right," said Old King Brady reassuringly.  
 "We're pals. You understand. She'll come hyer about half-past eight and ask for Mike McCue."  
 "She will?"  
 "Yas."  
 "Well?"  
 "Show her up to Room 14!"  
 "All right."  
 The two detectives now clambered up the stairs. When they reached the landing above Old King Brady discovered the number 14 on one of the doors.  
 Old King Brady lit the gas.  
 They had half an hour to wait, providing Meg was right on time. She might be late.  
 Old King Brady had counted up all the chances of this undertaking. It would have been hard to decoy Meg Pierce in any other way or to any other place.  
 For the woman was shrewdness personified. She could smell a trap a long way indeed.  
 But it was true that she was coming to keep the appointment at the Oceanic, suspecting nothing.  
 Promptly at 8.30 she walked into the place.  
 Mother Montgomery shook hands with her and Meg whispered:  
 "Is Mike McCue here?"  
 "He's in Room 14."  
 "Straight goods?"  
 "Straight!"  
 "I'll go up."  
 Meg climbed the stairs and paused before Room 14. She did not rap, but turned the handle of the door and went in. She made a spasmodic effort to leap backward. But too late.  
 Old King Brady had her by the shoulder and hurled her into a chair, while Young King Brady shut the door.  
 A revolver muzzle looked the woman in the face.  
 "Move a muscle and you die," said Old King Brady sternly. "Your race is run. The end has come!"  
 "Curse you, Old King Brady!" she gritted. "I'll live even this up with you. But you can't hold me."  
 "I can't, eh?"  
 "No. I ain't done anything!"  
 "We'll see!"  
 "What hev I done?"  
 "Where is the young girl, Gladys Baron?"  
 "What do I know about her?" she asked obdurately. "That's Mike McCue's affair."  
 "And yours!"  
 "I'll give my oath!"  
 "It is not worth a straw. Tell me where is Gladys Baron?"  
 "Ask Mike McCue!"  
 "I ask you!"  
 "Don't ye wish I'd tell?"

"You shall tell!"  
 "Is that so?"  
 "When I tell you something. Mike McCue and Jake Danton are both behind bars!"  
 "No!" she simpered. "I don't believe that. You're faking that. It's a lie!"  
 "You shall see!" said the old detective. "Put the handcuffs on her, Harry. Then blow the whistle."  
 "All right."  
 The young detective slipped the steel bracelets on the woman's wrists. In vain she begged and whined.  
 "What do ye want to take a poor woman like me for?" she pleaded. "I hain't done nothin'. I'm all right. If I knew where the gal was I'd tell ye!"  
 "You do know where she is and you shall tell," said Old King Brady. "If not it will be the worse for you!"  
 A hunted, maddened light came into the desperate woman's eyes. It seemed the glance of a maniac which she shot at the detectives.  
 "The jig is up!" she said bitterly. "I've had my day. If they git me in court it's a life sentence."  
 "You are a murderess and you know what the penalty is," said Old King Brady. "You might as well own up!"  
 "Will ye let me go?"  
 "No!"  
 "Ye won't?"  
 "Certainly not!"  
 "Then I'll never tell. The gal is tied hand an' foot an' kin never git away. She'll jest stay there and starve. Ye'll never find her. Oh, I've taken one life an' I kin take more. It won't hurt me. I wear it! She shall die if ye don't let me go!"  
 For a moment Old King Brady was tempted to offer freedom for confession. But the importance of the capture outweighed all else.  
 So he said:  
 "Blow the whistle, Harry. We might as well take her along!"  
 "No—no—no!" pleaded the woman in abject terror. "Don't take me away. I beg of ye, let me go. I'll tell all if ye will."  
 "If you will reveal the hiding place of Gladys Baron," said Old King Brady, "I will agree to intercede for you in court. That is the best I can do!"  
 "Let me stand up!" said the woman, drawing a deep breath.  
 The detectives complied.  
 The woman looked around in a hunted way. Her eyes rolled frightfully.  
 "Ye say Mike is in limbo?" she asked.  
 "Yes," replied Young King Brady.  
 "An' there's officers all around hyar waitin' fer to call 'em to raid this house?"  
 "That is true!"  
 A dismal wail escaped her.  
 "Then I hain't got anything more to live fer!" she cried.  
 "An' ye'll never hang me. Never!"  
 Neither detective imagined the course she pursued.



Before they could make the least effort to prevent it it was done.

Swift as a frightened hare the woman of sin and crime leaped past them and dashed her manacled hands through the glass panes of the window.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### WHICH ENDS THE TALE.

Meg Pierce broke through the sash, and before either of the Bradys could reach her, had cleared the sill.

One instant she hovered on the ledge and then, with an eerie cry, went out of sight into the night.

It was the act of an overtaxed brain, the deed of self-destruction peculiar to one driven to insanity.

For in that moment Meg Pierce went to her death.

It was two stories from the street. She fell upon the stone flagging.

Officers were upon the spot instantly.

They lifted her limp form. The manacled hands clutched her long black hair. A ghastly look was on her face.

She was dead.

An ambulance was summoned and she was taken to the Morgue. Thus ended the career of one of the most desperate woman crooks of New York.

To say that the Bradys were bitterly chagrined at the outcome of the decoy would be a mild statement.

It was a keen disappointment.

Moreover it gravely complicated matters.

They had not the slightest clew to the whereabouts of Gladys Baron.

Meg Pierce no doubt had her safely confined somewhere. It might even be true, as she declared, that the young girl was bound securely, hand and foot, in some out of the way place.

She might die before she was discovered.

What was to be done?

Never before in his life had Old King Brady's imperturbability come nearer to being ruffled than now.

The old detective was very near that state described as "rattled."

The two Bradys started for Jersey City post haste. They searched high and low, but in vain.

Not a trace could be found.

Not the slightest clew.

The million dollars seemed further away than ever to the detectives. The missing heiress seemed beyond recall.

It had been a long and hard chase to save her.

But it seemed destined to be a failure. She must be forever lost.

At this point Old King Brady went back to one of his favorite methods for the finding of a clew.

He led Harry to their lodgings.

Sitting down before a warm grate fire he lit his German pipe and said:

"My boy, we must go back to deductions. It is our only hope!"

"Deductions!" cried Young King Brady. "That sounds like it. You always could hit the truth in that way. But I don't see how we can deduce that girl's whereabouts from anything which has transpired so far."

"Well, here is a deduction," said the old detective. "Meg Pierce is the woman who had Gladys in her charge."

"Yes!"

"She must have kept her closely confined."

"Sure!"

"She brought her all the way back from Boston, after the gang left there."

"She did."

"Now, Meg was a woman of many localities. That is to say, she changed around a good deal, and had hiding places in every place where she operated."

"Just so."

"Now, we've only looked for the girl in one place. That was her retreat in Jersey City. We located that all right. The girl was not there. Ergo! No evidence accrued that she might not be in New York City at this very moment. Now, Meg had a sky parlor in Pell street. It's an inaccessible place at the top of a building."

"Jupiter!" exclaimed Young King Brady. "You have deduced a fact we have overlooked. I'll wager that's where she is."

The young detective started at once for Pell street. He found the building in which Meg's sky parlor was located. Up the stairs he dashed.

He tried the door.

It was locked.

Young King Brady heard a stifled moan. He put his shoulder to the door and burst it in.

The sight which met his gaze was thrilling. The dingy attic chamber, with only a skylight to admit air and light held a single occupant.

It was a young girl, pallid and wan, tied hand and foot to a dingy couch. There she had remained half in a faint for nearly twenty hours.

It was Gladys Baron.

Never to the end of her life did the young heiress forget the thrilling experience. The horror of those hours of torture seemed ever after a bitter, awful dream.

But rescue was come. Her enemies were no more. An hour later and she was tenderly carried into her own home and into the loving arms of her father.

The two Bradys' chase to save an heiress was at an end. Success had crowned their efforts.

It is needless to say that they got their reward of a million all right. Mr. Baron paid it in Government bonds and notes.

Of course this assured the independent fortune of the detectives. But Old King Brady had long been wealthy. It did not induce them to abandon the detective profession.

We have seen how Meg Pierce and the Big Six reached the end of their career of crime. Mike McCue and Jim Danton each got a life sentence.

And this brings to its end our story of the two Bradys' chase to save an heiress.



Before they could make the least effort to prevent it it was done.

Swift as a frightened hare the woman of sin and crime leaped past them and dashed

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